

pt. 4.

A SHORT
Inuentory of cer-
tayne Idle Inventions

W.

THE
Fruites of a close and
secret Garden of great
ease, and litle
pleasure.

| By C.T.

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1581.

4
TO THE
RIGHT VVORSHIP
EVLL I. R. C. T. WISH-
ETH LONGE AND
prosperous lyfe, to the glory
and pleasure of Al-
mighty G O D.



After I had be-
stowed some
parte of my
inforced ydle
time in draw-
ing these few
and frivulous
lynnes of most
vayne and y-
dle inuentions, onely of purpose to
occupy my mynd, which otherwise,
by occasions vvas subiect to receyue
a more troublesome & greater incommo-
dity: and then bending my selfe to
a further intent, to bestow the sowre
fructes of these my ydle gatheringes
(thoughe from a place of small plea-
sure)

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sure) of some such of my friendes,
whose curtesye I supposed woulde
vouchsafe very wel to accept of them
and in euery perticular poynt to par-
dō my folly: knowing that a litle mite
was as wel accepted at the poore wo-
mans hands, comming with a willing
mynde, as the great and costly prea-
sēt was at the handes of the rich. I thē
setled my selfe vnto a further conside-
ration, and this I wayghed and consi-
dered with my selfe, if I should rash-
ly take vppon me to send vnto one or
two, or many of my friends, this litle
būdle of trifling toyes: not vnlke but
in a short time it might be drawn frō
one friende to an other, and so at the
length cleane out of the hands of my
frendes, into the mouthes of some o-
thers, where perhappes it may bee so
champt & mumbled, as it shal cleane
be altered from the deacēt forme and
shape of mans meate, and made loth-
some to the sight of euerye man, and
onley fitte for the mouth of the Hogg.
Wherby (beyng desyrous to proceede
in my

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in my purpose) I toke occasiō to enter into the imagination of the nature & dispositiō of mā with this intent, that if happily I could find the ciuil & honest inclinatiōs of some, able to waigh in equal ballance, & cōteruaile with the vnciuil, & dishonest dispositiō of others, thē would I y more willingly be bold to aduenture y publishing hereof to some of my friends, according to my former meanig: & now after a litle deliberatiō takē therin, euē as the faulkner, who presently after euery flight, doth hyc and hasten hymselfe to take the fructs of his game from the foote of his hauke: I in the lyke manner callynge my wittes togeather, haue demaūded a iust accompt of them what they haue gathered aceordyng to my purpose, to serue my turne, or at the least to resolue my mynde, and as the Hauke doth open hys foote to yeelde the pray vnto his mayster, sometyme verye gentlye, and sometyme not so easelye, wythout some stryuinge, and wrestyng: euen so also haue
A iij. they

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they in the same manner, accordinge to their skill now opened themselves in this sort vnto me, as hereafter follo weth.

According to your appointment wee haue bestowed some time in trauayling and wandringe to and froe, and haue not onely trauerst the large and wyld field of this world, but as neare as wee coulde, haue also beaten euey little scrubbe and bushe, wherein to our iudgementes any likelyhoode of any thinge was to bee scene, whych possibly might serue your turne. And now as touching those things vvhych at this tyme doe onely concerne our charge, and serue for your purpose, which onely bee pennes and tongues, thus much wee haue gathered togeather of the behauiour & dispositiō of me therin. In þ opē field we haue sene to the plaine sight of the worlde, that there bee a very greate and infynite number of menne some wyth pennes in they reares, bendynge themselves onely vnto vvrighinge, some wyth
bookes

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bookes in their hands, and with great delight bestowinge all theyr tyme wholly in studye. Some others vvee fynde neyther with Pen, nor Booke, but only with a lump of flesh in their mouthes, so restles, as it seemeth seldom or neuer willigly cōtent to take any rest: of these some be restles onely of zeale & earnest good wil, cōtinually to do good, or els of pleasure to recreate themselues or delight their Fryends, withoute vtterynge at any tyme any cause of offence: some others agayne with their naturall and mother witts do alwaies busy & beate their braines, and most vainly occupy their tougues onely in carpinge and snatching, (doing nothing themselues) continually at other mens doinges. On the other syde, of those which geue their minds onely vnto wrightinge, we fynde the dispositions of them bee also diuerse, some to set forth and make playne vnto the ignorant and common people continually the heauenly and deuine mysteryes, onely for the pleasure and

THE FIRST LEF.

comfort to the Soule of man, some to
wryghting of such necessary matters,
which onely touch and concerne a com-
mon wealth, beyng as needful for go-
uernment, as the other is necessarye
for comfort. other some onely touch-
ing the safe keeping and healthful preserua-
tion of mans body, which be the Phi-
sitions. But leauinge to report any
further vnto you, of necessarye wri-
ters, we fynd an other kynde of peo-
ple in the plaine and open field, which
geue themselves very often to write
of pleasure, only to refresh sometimes
the weary witts as wel of themselves,
as of diuers other men, beyng perhaps
long incombred before, with matters
of greater wayght, which for recrea-
tion sake was neuer thought a thinge
greatly amisse. Of these we fynd ve-
ry many, which do greatly please and
delyght the humoure of the common
people, without any iust cause of of-
fence at all, more vnto one man then
to another.

And now to report vnto you no other
wise

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Wise in euery poynt then according to truth, wee cannot iustly say, that in the open field wee haue seene anye honest or wise man, that will take vpon him by his penne willingly to iustefye anye vndecent, dishonest, or vncomelye thyng, as wel for modestyes sake, as for the preservation & safe keepinge of their credits: for they know *Littera scripta manet*, that writtings remayne a long time, & be alwayes verye stronge testimonies agaynst euerye manne. Therefore wee fynde all menne strue to wright them in as good, and comely order, as possibly they canne. Wee speake generallye euerye manne, because we haue learned this in the worlde, that amonge those kynde of menne, with whom the commendable exercise of wrighting is mostly, & to best purpose vsed; whosoever is founde to write otherwise then according to honesty and good order, they would not haue him taken or reputed among honest or wise men, as a man, but rather as

A rare

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a rare deformed and mishapen monster, they thinke no greater discredite can any way fall vpon them, then to haue such a one to beare the name of a companyon among them. But yet full well it is knowne among many of the wyse and learned penmen (and to wel if it might be holpen) y^e many nimble witted marchauntes (though besydes very clownish & dul mannered dolts) vnder the counterfeict habits of graue and ciuile callynges, doe oftentymes intrude themselues into that comendable exercyse, wyth such dishonest and vnseemely behauiour, as the wise are no lesse ashamed, then grieued to thinke of that wicked abuse, though they haue not alwaies power to worke redres according to their good willes. But they say, it is taken for a rule infallable among them, that wit, subtilty and wickednes; be thre such louing Brothers, as seldome or neuer to bee founde a sunder: and that wisdom, pollicy, and honest behauioure on the other syde, be thre of the like. And of
our

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our selues we finde by common experience, that there is no greater vvyckednes in the world, then doth daile proceede from the witty mā: and yet (beyng as blynd in wisedome, as the man is in sight that hath lost both his eyes) when any thing comes from him craftely and wittely deuised, eyther by penne or speach, or any other way: he verely perswades himselfe, that at all handes, he is greatly extold for hys wit, but contrary to that blynde imagination of theirs, wee fynde that among the wise and learned, they bee had in continuall disdayne: for they say, that neither wit nor learning deserves anye reuerence at anye tyme, where honestye wanteth, and as for wisdom, vvhich in the latine tongue is tearmed *Sapientia*, it beareth continually with him the substance and fauor of al goodnes, or otherwise it must loose the name, and therefore euer to be had in great reuerence. But to bee shorte, besyde all this, wee fynde by greate hunting and seekinge in euery corner

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corner, & by beating in many bushes, that there is yet an other kinde of people which commonly lyke hedgecrepers, lye lurking in huggermugger, neuer once ventringe out into anye playne or open field, if by chaunce they come abroad they come so secretlie, as neuer seene eyther with pen in their eases, with booke in their hands, or scarcelye with any tounge in their mouthes: if by chance they wright or speake, it is alwayes in clowdes, in libel manner, and to the defamation, & discredite of some one or other particular and special man. But these and all other sortes of euill disposed men, wee fynd in this worlde (the good gouernment is such) that continuallye they be driuen to silence, and that the wyse and learned men do alwayes gouerne the rest, and be the other neuer so subtil or nimble witted, yet continuallye they do kepe thē in subiectiō & awe: and therefore thus much now we may boldlye say, that what soeuer is set forth by any mā either for necessities

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eyes sake to a cōmon wealth, for pleasures sake to the wryter, to gratify his friends, & delight himselfe, or for any other reasonable or lawfull cause (if comly & honest, & any thing tollerable he sides, so it be not to ridiculous,) nō most wise & best learned mā wil least of all condemne him, but rather allowe his forward and willing mynde, for they know it is no commō thing, for euery man to be singuler.

Conceyuing thus much, vpon this cōfideatiō thus had with my self, I find that though in nūber the wicked & euil disposed men do far surmount the good, yet by auctority, and by good gouernment, the good doth alwayes waygh downe the apparant euils: and God forbide that any apparante wickednesse shoulde euer beare anye sway. It hath alwaies bene seene, that one wise and learned man, haue euer bene hable to kepe a thousande other wittye naughty packes continuallye in subiection, and though they starte out somtimes by stealth like the dormond,

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mond, or Snaile, yet being once but toucht, they are alwaies fayne to put home and shrinke in their Horns agayne: and God forbid, that in anye Christian common wealth it shoulde euer be found otherwyse. Therefore now I haue found for my purpose that whatsoeuer I, or any other man shall take vpon hym eyther to speake, or wright, or any other way howsoeuer to put in acte: it is onely necessarilye required at euerye hande, that it deserue not the iuste rebuke or blame of the vvyse, and honest disposed manne: and as for those which bee contrary, who feareth them, I fynde must feare euery blaste of wynde: for do a manne wel, or do he ill, they will be as ready to fynd faultes, and to blame him, as the wynd wil be to blow vppon him. Wherefore now I haue taken such courage hereby, as I haue imboldned my selfe to fulfill the earnest desire of my mynde, to direct at this tyme, this litle tryfle vnto you, and if the small matter herein contayned, with my
duty

10
THE EPISTLE.

duty and goodwill, may but deserue
to be taken in good part at your hāds,
wherof I nothing doubt:& also of the
wyse, and indifferent reader, whiche
hartely I doe desyre., and lightlye to
passe ouer some vayne, and vnusuall
wordes, which perhaps in diuers pla-
ces herein may be found: then haue I
obtayned the substance of my desyre:
thus leauing to imagin of, & to answer
any other obiections which perhappes
may bee inuented agaynst mee,) least
beynge to tedyou in troublig you to
much, I here end: and as by duty bound
duringe life to be at your commaun-
dement, do most hartely commende
you vnto almighty God,

*From London the thirde
of October.*

1581.

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ce
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fo
th

TO HIS VERY
Louinge and especiall
friende, olde Oliuer Fyndfault, of
Englande, in the countye of Europe
Gent. William Woulwell, in
most friendlye manner
sendeth most hartys
greetinges.

(:::)



If I shoulde so
lightely lett this
passe, as hereby
to geue fre scope
to you my friend
and to euerpe o-
ther ticleheaded
penmā, (flowing
by dayly practice
and experience, in all cunninge, and curious
conceiptes, perusing this small pamphlet,
which claymeth no other tyle then a toy,) to
condemne þe inuentor hereof I shoulde great-
ly inturp him, and not vnworthely of greate
folly might condemne my self, in that I haue
so rashly thrust him so nakedly into þe mou-
thes of so manye, wheras perhaps if I had
geuen

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geuen him warninge thereof he might moze strongly and better haue furnished himselfe, but as naked as I founde him, so nakedlye straight wayes did I prefer him. And therefore the truth is, a very friend of myne being drawn from all the benefytes and pleasures of this world, and enforced contrarie to the ordinances and rules of nature to hyde and harbor himselfe (though as a guiltles guest) in a most solitary and dumptish desert, being therewith drawn from all ioy and felicity, in in any worldly necessary practise, and rather in deuoting himselfe to recreate, refresh, and delight his mind with sometimish conceits, then otherwise (being so inclosed) to charge it with any matters of importance or weight for his owne solace and pleasure, bestowed some part of that his idle tyme in certayne playne and light toyes of inuentiō, not much vnlike therein vnto a certayne idle kinge in Persia, who in his progresses, did nothing els but continuallye cutt, and whittle stickes, to diuie awaye the tyme. And by reason of my dayly recourse vnto him, being praiue therunto, I craued and obtayned the copppe of this now extant, the which I diuers times and ofte perusynge ouer, toke occasion as a toy, to like so well, as I procured it to the presse, with this title as you see, and thought it as a tokē worthy to send vnto you, to read
whe .

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whether being led there unto, by the greates & good affection I bare to the maker, or by desert of the matter, I know not: but wel we both know, it is the naturall inclination of friendes, one alwayes to thinke the best of an other. Therefore as I know the first inuentor hereof ment nothing lesse, then to put this forth to the publicke construction of the world, to hasard or aduenture the allowing or disallowing therof. I will not take vpon me to geue out any shewe of commendation therein at all. First because I knowe it was not made to that intente, and besides, lest if it should happen to be condemned of others as a bayne and tryfling toy, I should therewith also be condemned to haue made a partiall and vnworthye prayse. But secondly (if you can rightly consider it) as by the least bird that flies in the ayre, by the least fish that swims in the Sea, and by the smallest worme that creepes vpon the earth. The omnipotent & mighty power of God doth as fully & playne appeare, as by the lougest and greatest monuments that beares life in this worlde: even so by the smallest booke that can be written, by the most babling ballet that can be made, and by the least word that can be spoken, his strange and wonderful workes in man, with his most liberrall and incomparable gifts vnto the

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So as perfectly set forth and shew themselves
as by the greatest volume þeuer was writ-
ten, by the warghest or wpest concept that
euer was made, or by the most eloquence or
learned oration that euer was vttered. The
honest wise and ciuil man doth as little des-
pyse the worst and meaneſt begger that goeth
by the waye, as he geerly honoureth þe chee-
fest & greatest prince that ruleth in þe world,
euen so here the indifferent and wel disposed
myndes, will as little trippe, or spurne at theſe
Dumpe, lame, and haultinge toy, as they
would greatly fauour bypon, or runne after
a moze fyne or pleasaunt inuention. But ther
is an old pꝛouerbe Figulus Figulo inuidit, one
Potter hateth an other, the which to auoyd,
these may be sufficiently to assure you, in that
I know you are a crafter man in that arte,
that as for this vnskillful potter, this small
trifle and toy is the first that euer hee made,
who wil not iustify it to be lawfull nor good,
in that he was neuer pꝛentice thereunto, and
for any he intendes, I dare boldly say shall
be the last, vlesse it be a little cup or cruets
for his owne mouth: yet say if your friendly
actions hadde at anye tyme bene. agreable
vnto your continual colourable shewes, you
would haue enabled him long before this by
your friendly instructions, worthe of your
fellowship and company.

But

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But vnderstanding he had, though to verpe
imall and litle purpose, some smacke in this
your art, as only to take your vessels in hand
and to reade them ouer, you alwayes shooke
hym of, demaunding a double fee for the tea-
ching of your skill, much like to amulstion,
who vsed to take of his schollars, which had
learned before they came vnto him, double
soulare, double that he toke of others, which
neuer learned before, sayinge that hee tooke
double paynes with them, as first to make
them forget that they had learned before, and
then to teach them perfectlye agayne: who if
now he were anye shoulde surely synde as
small resorte of schollers, as I thinke you do
in that you are so curous in your art. Ther-
fore to imagine this short, and vnpleasaunte
sounde, here at this tyme presented vnto
your audable and pleasaunt eares, to be but
as a preludium, vnto other conceytes, & that
he will stryue to marre your markets, with a-
ny such lyke rough betwen, or mishapen ves-
sels, it shal be in vayne, for he intendes nothing
lesse. And as for this small conceipt, here at
this tyme, being cast in a very litle mould, &
wherin great want of an artificial worke-
man must needes appere: I hope you will not
stryue to condemne, but rather excuse, though
it hath nether heade to begynne, handle to
hold by, nor foote to stand vpon & though

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perhaps neare aboute the end you shall find it very imperfect, and so full of secreete chinks and little crannies, as it will hardly hold liquor without leaking: but if your graue head shall esteeme it as an ydle toy, imagine it (as it is) the fruites of an ydle place. For phisicke sake I know you haue swallowed many vnpleasant and bitter pylls, for friendship sake you may as wel at this time digest this trifling and ydle toy. But if you shall answere mee, that your such phisical reserpts haue alwayes enforced you to vse the pay of an apple, or els to roule them in suger, otherwisse they might haue stucke in your throte: then for answere agayne, I can but aduise you, for the more ease digesting of this my friendly conceipt, sent onely as a token vnto you & to the rest of my friends, to roule it in the pay of an apple, in the soft and slippery pappe of your gentle patience, or otherwys (in stead of a suger lose) in some sweete and sugred spice of your most friendly interpretation: and in this (for the old acquaintance of longe tyme continued betweene vs) I hope I shall not sayle but winne of your willing & friendly conformity: and therfore now, since I haue sufficiently declared vnto you, the cause of my publishing herof, with the dispositiō and intent of the deuisor, and leaue I shoulde make this my forstrotting shew or preamble (which
right.

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rightly should be but a bzeefe Declaration of
what is to come) longer then this his whole
rase which is very short, and considering my
old lesson (wozthp in euey act to be remem-
bered and obserued) quod satis est sufficit, I
commend me vnto pon, pon vnto God, and
these few lines following vnto your friendly
construction,

*Your assured friend VVilliam
VVouldwell,*

A SHORT PRELVDIVM
to the friendly Reader.

Interpone tujs interdum gaudia curis

TO mingle mirth sometymes with care
and vsyng neither of them to much
Preserues thy body vvel in health,
it keepes thy mynd in perfect state.

To glutte in sorrow day and night
from day to day, from yeare to yeare,
Thou drownst thy selfe in drousy moodes,
it syngles thee from all thy vuites

The hotchpot for varieryes sake
is oft accepted of the best
And taken as a daynty dish
if kyndly mixt vvith diuers tastes

Resceites of all preseruatiues
vvhere shail you fynde more fyt for health
Then vvher the skilful mixtures be
in dayly practise to be made.

A sugred swete and syluer sound
the musicke mixt doth alvvayes yeeld
VVith harmony so heauenly,
vvherein no man but greatly ioyes.

And here to make a vvindow sight,
out of my mynd, novv to your eyes
Since mixtures make all thinges so good,
let this my hotchpot beare no blame.

A flick-

Idle Inventions

1

A flickeryng flye with fettered feete,
fast tyde in scrawling Spyders web,
A stinking seate of flattering Fleece,
vvhether scarce he can put out his nebb.

A byrde, a beast, more meeter may
the vvitles vvhodcock paynt himselfe
V Vhom beaten seamen did assaye,
so oft to vvarne from shollow shelve,

A guiltles guest and harbored longe
in hollow caue of hardest stone,
V Vith patience now doth salve his vvronge,
and vvisn it vvere his harme alone,

From thence this ydle toy doth spring
vvhether vvere greene nimble vvit seed sowne
Greate crops of toyes that field might bring,
and ranke, if oft it vvere not mowne.

V Ve see vvhether ground is newly layed,
with vweedles and thistles fyrst it springes,
V Vhen sutes in loue be fyrst assayd,
it fyrst vwith trifyng toyes begynnes,

Before vvee come to mannes estate,
in childish toyes longe tyme vve spend
And after then our youthul rate,
vve walke as vvhild til nere our ende.

V Vho

Idle Inuentions.

VWho vvil strong houldes attempt to win,
do first vvith vweaklinges trye their stréngth,
And so the strykers all begin
and grovv to courage great at length.

Before the souldiour presse to vvarres
he musters fyrst in sport to trye
And there if fit, the boulder dares
aduenture then in field to dye.

VVe likervise see vvhen plants do spring,
before their leaues can spread abroad,
First forth their litle buds must bring,
and then at length their borres they lode,

Thus every thing if rightly vvayde,
vvith tryfles small doth fyrst begin
Rightly therfore it is not sayd,
this tryfling toy great blame doth vvinne.

A needful thing in common vvealth
no man, nor vvoman thinkes to long.
VWhich soule or body bringes to health
but still more more is all their song

A tryfling toy in private sporte
if tedious vvorkes vvithout delight,
Blame not therfore this toy though short
vvhich needles here is brought to light.
Pater

Idle Inuentions

2

*Patet que pardit virtutis arētaque
via est.*

The Castle

This nar-
row lane
of virtue
with her 4
capt.

*Prudence,
Justice,
Fortitude
Temperāce.*

rekeynes
to rest.



of rest

this wide
field with
these 3
captaynes

*the world.
The flesh.
The Devil*

Leades al
to destruc-
tion.

The vvorldly souldiours,

Idle Inuentions.

The godly, pollicke, & wise gouernment of the one, wth the wicked, subtil, & diuillish illutions of the other, euer since their beginning & first entring into field of worldly fight, which was when Adam at the first subtle intisement, & temptinge tounge of Eue, fyrst puld the Apple of p^{ar} tree, is by many learned and godlye auctors far more aptly discribed, better set forth, more largely & playnly publyshed then possibly by anye here at this tyme, can be spoken or imagined.

And the lyke I may say of euerye other particular theame, in this shor^{te}, & small pamphlet hereafter following.

For euery litle strayte and narrowe path which here is taken woulde most easilye conduct and playnly lead a most cunning and perfite pennman into a mosse ample, and large field most pleasant and necessary.

And therefore leaninge that wyde and fertil field wherin most sweete, holesom, and necessarye flowers of greate good, and requisite matters might bee gathered (as to intreate now at this present of these

these three byles and fower virtues,
with the substance of euery other mat-
ter hereafter followinge,) I rather
bende my iourney forthwith according
to the tytle of this toy, into a more se-
crete and seldome used garden, where
I intende not to gather of all sortes of
flowers such plenty as to make therof
a great and goodly garland, but rather
more likely no flower of pleasure at al.
For wel do I know, that hardly should
I finde (were I in place neuer so plen-
tifull) such a flower of pleasure or de-
lyght, which hath not alreadye hereto-
fore, by some or other bene presented
vnto many tender noses, who perhaps
if agayne they should be tryed with the
lyke, would rather stop their noses, &
disallow therof, beyng so oft cloyde with
such accustomed sauors, thē they would
prayse the sweetness thereof were it ne-
uer so pleasaunt, which we dayly see by
great experience, as for example this
for one amonge many others may well
bee noted, y when wanton youth most
wildly

Idle Inuentions

wylde flyinge here and there exercys-
sing the yowthful winges of his uncon-
stant and flickeringe mynde, frō place to
place, light happily vpon some fertile,
and pleasaunt ground, where he fynds
great plentye of sweete and comforta-
ble flowers: then settelynge his mynde
according to the humour of his eye, hee
syts him downe as it were vpon some
one choise & spetial moulehil neere vnto
to the flower he best delytes; and there
resting his bodye from tyme to tyme,
(though with a restless mynde) rather
willing to feede the desire of his wantō
eye, in stil perusing & beholding his cho-
sen & long eye bitten flower, then to sa-
tisfy his hungry and needy stomacke, w
any other nourishing or necessary food:
at length after many bashful, & priuate
attemptes, sometyme handling y stalk
& of centymes kissing the leaues: gathe-
ring vp some crummes of courage, sud-
daynly takes it vp by the rootes, & ca-
ryes it cleane awaye: which lightly hee
kepes for a tyme most louingly, some-
while in his hand, some while in his bo:
some

Idle Inuentions

4

some and strayght in his lap, somtyme
to his nose, some tyme to his lips, & not
vnlke but somtyme to his bed: for that
he wakes no soner in y morning then he
desyres to haue it neere his nose, to bee
short, his delightes be such therein, as
who knows not that he esteemes it be-
fore all other growinge herbes, or flo-
wers vnder the sunne: he loues it accor-
ding to the old saying of the poet Ana-
creon, as a sweete mischiefe, and with
the saying of Propertius, as a sweete ty-
ranny because he indureth his tormēts
willingly, & is sildome content to settle
or quiet his mynde where he lynes, but
alwayes there where hee loues. Hee
sticks not for the loue thereof to adue-
ture the ouerthrow of his owne body w
Roderick of Spaine, who lost his king-
dome for the loue of Camma: or to en-
terpryse the deathe and destruction of a
straunger, with Retormodicus, who o-
uerthrewe y whole state of the Lacede-
monians for the loue of Scedafus daugh-
ters, & w Cateline, who slue his owne
fome for the loue of Orestilla. And all
this not withstandinge, after a whyle,

Idle Inventions

his eager sight being once satisfied, all the rest of his senses which before took their delights: grow as great to mistaking as before in their first beginning they kindled and grew to love, a thing no less strange unto all such as still remaine free their flower to chuse, then it were miraculous for y^e hot mount Aetna, to become the cold hill Caucasus, & whose lot soever it is to tread y^e world do not valikely stūble oftentimes vpon many such (though lost and cast away) pleasant and sweete flowers. This example the worlde ouer is daily seene. And therefore now, since that such famous inventions be so cunningly deuised, and seuerallye knyt vp together, you may for a pēny haue in your pocket choise of many pretty toys at al times to delight you. I know it were now in vayne for me to strue to gather y^e like, though my inforced ydle leasure might wel serue therūto, for in y^e it should be superfluous, it would rather greatly y^e then any thing at al delight: but my
intent

intent is (though I bee longe in com-
ming therto) in this my chosen and so-
litary Garden, to pick out þ most try-
fling and baynest weedes that possiblye
may be found, and therewith to make (to
passe my weary tyme) a small and litle
poesy, the rather for that I know, many
be so cloyde with pleasaunt and swete
sauors, as they oftentimes seeke for
most filthy and stinking weedes to singe
vpon. But as I woulde not stryue be-
yonde my skill to picke this ful of ple-
asaunt and delectable flowers, euen so
would I be loth to poyson it with such
vnholesome and stinking weedes as it
should yeeld too fylthy or yrkesome a sa-
uour. Therfore if I be not deceyued, it
shal yeeld very rarely any sauor eyther
swete or sowre at all: and in so doinge
as the sweetenes shal litle delite you, þ
sowre tast shal as litle offende you.
And therfore to be short, leauing these
circumstaunces and endles rownd run-
ning about the bush. The first begin-
ning hereof (though more briesflye then
tunningly) shewes the weake and feeble

Idle Inuentions.

entring of man first into this wicked worlde nourished by, and safely kept by thre chosen nurses (though in more soft and gentle bandes) not much unlike to the poore captiues and prisoners vnder the custody and chaynes of their appoynted gaylors, vntill the Session dai of their gail deliuerie: wher straight they release their iudgemēt (as by the law rightly condemned) to bee led into the wyde wildernes of this wretched world, wher (as pilgrims) passyng lōg yowthful and wearye tyme, some lyght happely into the hands of good & Godly disposed men, some into the hands of most cruel tyrāts, whose simple, sēceles & brutish myndes serue thē cōtinually to tormēt and destroy y next vnarmed naueweake men, y by chaunce fall into their deuīsh dints, in reuēge of some iniury done vnto them before they equals, or superiours: from the which I pray god deliuer me, & preserve al others. Some agayne are chosen and placed in princely seat of rule: some in place of diuine cōfessell, some in place to nourish and feede

A CON-

20

Idle Inuentions.

a cōmon wealth, some to cure the sick,
and diseased bodics, and some continu-
ally in place to deccaue the whole world
with whom no sticklers at any time, as
yet coulde euer preuale, til death him-
selfe in proper person, coms to play his
most playne and vnskillfull quarters, as
hereafter in this small Samplet, both
more playnly & briefly appere, a thing
though vnfitly intermingled with such
idle and vayne inuentions, and though
vnaptly bearyng the title aboue named
in that the name of god ought neuer to
be so taken in vayne as once to bee na-
med vnder the title of such a toy: yet my
intent, and matter therein considered,
it shall not bee greatlye amis, if by the
reader it may be construed to the best:
(which I desire) for I stryue not to iu-
stefy the perfectnes therof, in forme, in
style, in matter, or in any thyng. And
therefore I may not otherwise but cō-
mend it (as a tryling toy) vnto the best
and most friendly construction.

Idle Inuentions.

THe filly babe in cradel rockt
cries alvvaies out as pincht vvith paines
That impish thing, it vvould be knockt
sayth hairbraind hag, knock out the brains.

But shee ful little knowves or thinks
Of cradle crying mistery
VVhere man to death his drafc first drinkes,
And there lith cheand to misery.

It speakes a language strange to man,
vvhich fevv or none vvcl vnderstandes
But fayne it vvould from vvhence it came,
to earth agayne from all those bandes,

It struggles vvweakly God doth knowv
Ful oft vvithin the Nurces armes,
Then geue it leaue the mynd to shovv,
to earth it flyes and feares no harmes.

But vvhat should cause such harmeles soules
to strue so strangely straight to dye.
It is a ball vvhich nature trovvles
Before their eies, though secrete.

Of glasse, vvherin they see their vvoes
vvhich in this vvorld they must abyde
And that they be among their foes,

And

Idle Inuentions

7

And therfore they vvould gladly hyde,

But striue or strougle as they vvill,
 vvrithe or vvrest vvich vvay they can.
 And cry or bleare they out their fill
 they lye still tyde til state of man.

And then as sone as they begin
 to grovve in strength to treade the ground,
 The Father captayne stryues to vvyn.
 and trayne them by alluring sound.

Straight from their babish svvadling bandes,
 into the ample fighting field,
 And first geue them into their handes
 their Absley bookes, as speare and shield.

VVhervvith vve dayly see them vvalke,
 and tossing them (though childishly)
 As silly tatling babes in talke,
 not thinking of their misery.

And how they all be prest to fight
 in field of vvorldly vvretched vvoe,
 But vvantonnes is their delite
 Till they to vvretched field do goe,

VVherin all fathers do agree.

C 3.

Aa

Idle Inuentions.


As captaynes tryde in vvarres before
And longes in armes the childe to see
vvhich doth great ioyes to them restore,

And thus mans lyfe is militant
in dayly styrting here and there:
Of courage stoute and puissaunt,
before all thinges that earth doth beare.

From cruel vvarres it neuer stint,
though bloudshed small or none be scene,
A thousand tymes more hard then flint,
a fort it doth besiege to vvin,

VVhich vvorldly art did neuer make
nor can be vvon, but by the best
And named, (vvhich force can neuer shake)
the seate of euerlasting rest.

VVho thinkes his life most strong to fight
agaynst the vvorld, his rase to end.
Is sonest brought to vvofull plight
if vertue doth no succour send.

 And therefore the necessary &
wayghty force hereof consi-
dered, wyo could most cun-
ningly or closly conuay him-
selfe into the sight of this most cruell &
conti-

cōtinual battaile) bearyng alwaies before his body, true faith, as his buckler, & placing constancy as a sure bulwarke of defence, should doubtles daily behold far more wonderful wracke, & destruction, with more secreete subtil pollicies & deceiptes, the through y whole world in any our accustomed bloudy conflicts, betwixt man & mā, he could possibly see al dayes of his life. No blowes be thet to be seene, no noyse to be hard, no baite of victoꝝ at any tyme to bee made, the slaughter be it neuer so great, is euer stā and scilēt. Al deadly wounds being there daily and howerly infinite and innumerable one only Phisition doth alwayes cure, who farre beyond all art, doth so continually strengthen and refresh all those incāped and fightynge souldiers; as from the tyme they first pitched their field vnto this day the battayle neuer quailde, nor yet till the last hower euer shall. But now beyng outward (as an vnskilfull passiger of this my shorte and easpe iourneye, yf I should contrary to my former promise,

Idle Inuentions.

forlake my playne and easy trot, and suddenly fall into a more swift, and curious pace, intending to leape and runne beyond my limits into this wyde field, & world of continuall warre. Upon my returne agayne, you woulde certaynly expect a perfect & true report of some great and wonderful newes, the order and manner of their field, with description of some notable late battaile, and conquest, with many other questions, which (for want of experience) I cannot imagine: and then if my iudgemēt, disposition, eloquence, and memorie (the chiefest tooles, and instruments of euery cunning and perfect wise messenger) being tried with the touchstone of some artificiall workeman: shall appeare so utterly void of any good, or perfite mettall, as in no parte able to performe what is looked for, & shall iustly be condemned, in so foolishly disclosing mine owne imbecility & weaknes: which otherwise by silence I might stil haue concealed. Therfore I wil not take vpon me as a messenger of any skill, to
make

make any report therof. But whoso-
uer can wylsely and wel dispose himself
shal moze fitly be his owne messenger.
And ther may behold the innumerable
number of worldinges, hauinge conti-
nually their desyred fort in view, dayly
marching forward therunto, howe by
many subtill and secrete pollicyes they
they be alwayes foretald, & stopt theyr
waye, and shall playnly see, agaynst e-
uerpe lone and single man, thre most
stronge and mightye aduersaries, the
world, the flesh, and the deuill, who co-
tinually keepe themselves most strong-
ly in armes, hauinge wome þ rule and
dominion of the greatest parte of the
worlde, onely leauing a most narrow &
straight lane vnto this our fort and ca-
stle of rest, wherin standes Vertue, be-
pag at continuall warre and defiance a-
gainst those deadly and mortal enemies
of man, as strongly and as surely fur-
nished against them, as possiblye may
be. With continuall becks and signes:
not fayling dayly and howerly to sende
her secrete priuy scoutes, and messen-
gers

Idle Inventions.

gers from man to man, to instructe and geue vs knowledge of that narrowe and secret way, and therewith neuer refuseth, to such as be willing to followe her to accompany and assist them, with what strength she can possibly make, to safecunduite and leade them through y^e thickest of their enemies. But this vertue (beyng a continuall and open fiend vnto vs) with all her most & strongest furniture of munition and defence, is dayly met withall, and incountered and yet strongly abides those continual conflictcs, sometyme escaping with victorie, and sometyme with losse: but most seldome doth she returne conquered vntlesse the dissemblinge Captiue (whom her purpose is to safecunduit & defende) most cowardlye quayles, and shrynkes from her by the way.

The pore souldiour, is no soner espyed by his diligent dayly attendantes, the world, the flesh, and the deuill, to be creaping a way vnder the banner of vertue, but strayghte they flye vnto him with as sure hold as possible may be, & then
beyng

being faynt harted, easy to be allured,
 by their glorious and subtil outwarde
 shewes of decept, hee easily lets goe his
 hould by vertue, and yeeldes to their ty-
 rannous (though secreete) fleshly, & car-
 nall tugges. But contrariwise if he be
 so strong of courage not easy to be cari-
 ed by any secreete or subtil whyrlewynde,
 or so wary in wisdom and foresight, as
 to eschew all their forwarned snares,
 and willing to withstand those his en-
 nemyes unto death, then shee most lo-
 uingly, and readily embraceth hym, as
 her adopted child: and then to beholde
 how gently and easily she lyke a natural
 mother, drawes hym by little and little,
 out of the tearynge Teeth of those most
 cruell tyrantes, and how cunningly and
 carefully shee strives to cary him safely
 throughe their dangerous and cruell
 force, it woulde doubtles dyspue all her
 strongest enemies most earnestlye and
 faythfully to loue, honor, and obey her,
 euen to the end.

And thus in bewyage the secret and
 cunning warres betwixt the world and
 this

Idle Inuentions.

this our mortall life, (wherein much more may bee vnderstode, then by this ydle pen, can possibly bee vttered) our subtile and secrete enemies wee shall the better eschew, and our safest way to the castell and seate of euerlasting rest, shall more easilye learne, which (as seemes is not the broade and common beaten way, but rather a very narrow and sildome troden mossy lane. And as our foresayde aduerlaries with al their armie, and might be dayly remayning in the one, geuinge vs continuall repulse in all attemptes vnto this our euerlasting fort: and trayninge vs lyke drunken myse into their flatterynge pytfalles of euerlastinge destruction: Euen so our most louing and naturall friend vertue, with al her power continually possesseth the other (which is þ narrow lane) alwayes readye on the other syde, there to rescue vs in. And theruppon is it written, though otherwyse, as wel it may be vnderstood)

Patet quæ perdit. &c.

THE

ii

**The friendly greet-
ing and comminge together
betwene Idlenes, &
a student.**



The godly & wel dis-
posed man, satlinge Student:
hymselfe both in bo-
dy and mynd, (bow-
yng as faythfully the
knees of his hart, as

many do faynedly in most dissemblynge
manner the knees of their outward bo-
dyes) vnto his deuoute meditations, &
prayers, is very sensably to his feeling
as he certaynlye thinkes, pulled often-
times by the head oft times by the leggs;
and some tyme by other parts of the bo-
dy. It is not a thinge strange or rare to
be heard of, that most straunge & terri-
ble visions haue also appered vnto such
kynd of men, to moue them vnto terror
and feare of purpose to remoue them
from their such deuotion and prayer:
who it is, or what it is, that doth worke
and

Idle Inuentions.

and bying such continual lettes, and incumbrances vnto them, I leaue to the graue and learned deuynes, whose profession (for want of knowledge) neither dare, nor can take vpon me to shew: yet for my playne and short opiniõ therein, I thinke it is the secreete snatching, and priuy byting dogge of hel.

But the godly and holy men are so daily & hourly bitten therewith, as comie þe deuil himselte, his dog, or his damme, or what saynt soeuer of his hce listes to sende, the ofter they fele themselves bitten, and snatcht at, the ofter and more greatly do they take occasiõ therby, not onely to pray the more deuowtly, but also more hartelye to reioyce vnto themselves, knowing that the deuil, with al hys companye of Angelles, is neuer so diligent and eager in busyinge himselte to winne, but where he lighteth in such cunning company of gamsters, as he is alwayes in feare to loose. which ys neuer among dysers, and carders, nor yet in any alehouse, or cyplunge pastymes,

ne.

Idle Inuentions

12

uet in any feasting, or banquetinge, nor
 in braue and gorgeous shewes, nor yet
 in any one delyght, or worldly pleasure
 at al, for in some of these, as in continu-
 all dysing and cardinge, which is neuer
 without swearyng and flaring, in con-
 tinuall feasting and banquetting whiche
 is neuer without drunkenness, and glut-
 tony with such lyke, he is neuer in fear
 among the, as once to loose. But which
 of them soeuer can best and most clean-
 ly beare his ale, or with hys cunnynge
 slaighes and ingling trickes, deceaue
 most, and win of all the rest. & he denill
 for his part is sure at the end as cleanly
 to beare him, and as cunninglye to win
 them all, and as in worldly delytes hee
 lyke wyse resteth hymselfe quiet, neuer
 offering any trouble or disquiet vnto a-
 ny of them, onely in hope that the ples-
 sures of the world wil be sufficient in-
 strumetes to drawe them also to the
 bente of hys bowe, as well as if he him-
 selfe were in presence among them: &
 this appcisseth his bottonles and insa-
 tiable gulph,

De

Idle Inuentions.

Desyrous if possibly he might to draw
and draw vnto himselfe, the poore inno-
centes and soules of al the worlde. But
there be many godly and well disposed
men, who by the continuall helpe, and
inspiration of the holy Ghost, haue at
all attemptes as great cunnynge to pre-
uent hym, as he hath alwayes subtiltye
in seeking to tempte and deceaue them:
they neuer muse or start at anye of hys
sodayne or secreete shadowes, but conti-
nuallye laboure and bend themselves to
withstand his such wicked deuises.

And now to shew myppresent and secret
trouble, euen so in the verye same man-
ner, though not setting my selfe in the
lyke Godlinesse of deuotion, as before
mentioned, yet bendyng my selfe vnto a
worldly and necessary studie, I feeble e-
uen now of late very censably & playnly
many secret and priuy twitches, but by
whom I cannot imagine (hearing nor
seyng any thing at all,) as for the deuill
I hope it is not, for man or woman it
cannot possibly be: and therfore (desy-
rous to follow as nere as I canne, the
steps

Idle Inventions. 13

Steppes of these godly, and well disposed me, what soeuer it is, until I hear further therof, I wil not so easily be overcome.

Idlenes.

Sir to driue you from your dumps and great admirations, it is euen I.

Student.

Friend Idlenes, I may not say welcome. But since you are come, geue me your hande: what was the cause, that you so oft & so secretly puld me by the sleene, that I could neuer neither see, nor heare you?

Idlenes.

Ohsy, it was for verie mere good will which I did beare, as alwayes I haue borne most willingly vnto you.

For looking priuely and peeping ouer your shoulders, and seynge you so earnestly

Idle Inuentions.

nessly besyde your booke. I thought to my selfe, if sodaynlye I shoulde haue blowen out my trumpet, or haue breathed any loude sounde, or synging into your eares, or if sodainly I should haue appeared vnto you, I mighte perhaps haue so frightened, and driuen you vnto such a sodayne start and terrible feare, as durynge your lyfe euer after, you mighte thereby haue fallen into some wonderful and great paulsey: and therefore in the most gentle and frēdly manner I could e, I easily and priuily (fearing your such disturbance) puld you by y sleue: **W**hereupon hearynge you so grauely beginning your grounde, and running such descant vpon the Demill, hys dogge, and his damme, I stode a longe tyme (as though greatle amazed) expecttinge your laste stroke, and how you would make your close: wherby at length, I might plainly perceyue you in a manner likened mee (though not named) vnto the Demill and hys dogge, which (consideryng my continu-
all

Idle Inventions. 14

all friendlye mynde towardes you) I
could not chuse, but take very unkynd-
lye.

Student.

Friend iniury, I knowe you haue not
bene so baselye brought vp in beggers
bosome with ignorance, but that you
do as well know the order and course of
this worlde, as the greattest learned, &
most famous Clarke of all: your white
heade, and many yeares in greate expe-
rience haue brought you sufficiēt know-
ledge, to counteruayle the best: conti-
nuall companie and oft handlyng doe
bryng the wyld and brutish beastes, at p-
length to be tame: and manye Byrdes,
as Parattes, and Pycs, with such lyke
oftentyms to speake. Experience tea-
cheth vs, that companie many tymes
doth worke greate wonders: and what
is it that company will not cause, & the
old Proverbe is, that companie often-
tymes doth make many olde men verie
good cookes: and my frend take you frō

D 2

com-

Idle Inuentions.

com pany take your heade from your shoulders. Sometime like a roge, and shakeragge, halfe naked, a man may fynd you daſcing among beggers, some while brawling, and fighting, and some time cracking of lice, sometime in mean appataile, in tauernes, and tipling houses, tossing, and swilling, and cracking of crownes, sometime agayne, in most braue and gorgeous attyre, a companie with the best: to be short, of what estate or calling is he of, into whose company sometime or other, you haue not intruded your selfe.

Therefore beyng so well acqnaýnted, as I know you are with the natures, and dispositions of all men, it semeth verie straunge vnto me, that now you shoulde seeme so ignorant of me, as to take any thing vnkindly whatsoener I haue spoken of you: for you know right wel, that notwithstanding most men are content secretly oftentymes to entertayne you, yet few or none at any tyme, but roges and knaues, dare for their credits sake, openly allow or commend you: it cannot
be

Idle Inuentions

15

bee also unknowen vnto you, that you haue alwayes bene cronacled to be þ au-
thor and mother of all mischiefe & vice,
calling your wits togeather, and reme-
bring your selfe, you know more herein
thē I can tel you. Therfore neuer take
the wordes of your friende, when they
seeme to offende you, but rather bys
mind. For notwithstanding my former
speech I wil not be to curious, nor shy
of your company, a wyse mā (I know)
sometyme wil admit of the simple foole
and prating knaue to sit at hys bord, the
one to make sport in laughing, þ other
in talkinge, and both to passe away the
tyme: for a yonge man to bee alwayes
graue, vntil his very roote beginnes, &
growes to bee gray: were surely in my
concept as greate a follye in hym, as if
alwayes he should be ydle. Therfore my
friend, since now you haue so gently, so
adulyedly, and so friendly presented your
selfe vnto me, and beyng I knowe the
messenger and seruante, and atturney
of an atturney, discourage not your selfe
at any thing I haue spokē, but euen as

Idle Inuentions.

shoulde as you would be with the greatest acquaintāce you haue, be euen now as shoulde with mee, & acquaint me with the cause of your comming.

Idlenes,

Shy as you haue sayd I confesse in euery part it is true, I fynd now greates reason doth wish me to take in very good part what soeuer ye haue alreadye spoken, or shal hereafter euer speake.

A QUESTION, BY IDLE-
nes put forth to the
Studente.

Sir, if my vayne and ydle motions, shoulde not trouble your graue and well occupied mynde, I woulde with your patience craue your aduise and iudgement in a matter (though verie common and easy) wherin at this time my ydle braynes be some thing busied.

Student

Student.

My busines is not so greate, but I may very wel afford to graunt you audience, and also answere you if neede shal so require, & therfore let me heare your mynd, and shew mee the troublesome and clammie way wherein you, sticke, and if my skill may possibllye worke you out a more playne and easye passage, you shal not lōg misse of your such earnest desire.

Idlenes.

Sir, since your curtesy is so great to bend your self so gently, & so friendly towards me, I hope I shall not neede in hast to scrangle my wittes togeather in vtterpng my mynd at this tyme vnto you, for I haue so oftentimes heretofore, & euen now of late to my cost, found y old prouerbe to be true, that hast maketh wast as now wherein I may chuse. I wil rather crepe with the snayl, then runne with the Harte: for wee see by experience, that the slowest going Asse ys alwayes the surest bearynge beast,

Idle Inuentions.

the slowest winged hauke (if any thing good besides) doth commonly shew the best sport, and kepes her selfe longest from any mischaunce: for hast we see þ many of the femanine sex, haue sodaynly fallen backward to many incurable and great mishaps, and of men, as many haue tumbled headlonge forwarde, puttinge themselves in daunger of as greate perril. do wee not dayly se, that many for hast offer to put meate into their mouthes, gaping full wyde, and yet puts it besydes: and many wth spones meates, before their mouthes can be open, chop the spones agaynst their teeth, and all to besquatter their lippes and beardes if they haue any: do not manye drinke so hastily, as sometime very suddenlye they almost quacke, and choke themselves, and then (if ashamed) wil say I haue drunke a crum: haue you not knowen diuers men, and sometyme many women, to fare þ worse for their snatching. Such as can tary tyme and leasure do cōmonly fare best, & yet I agree þ tarier thinks always long, vnto
what

what tyme this tarying must haue re-
latiō, I leaue it vnto them of that kind.

But to descant a litle further vppon
this playne and hasty ground: if I shal
not trouble you to longe: haue you not
heard that sometyme a man hath salne
in company by channce with a woman,
as it were vppon the frydaye, and hath
beddido her vpon saterday, wedded her
vppon Sunday, and al torepented him-
felfe vppon monday: if repentaunce in
such be differd for 2. dayes, it is a mar-
uayle, but if for a weeke, it is a greate
wonder: such is the nature of hast, sone
rype, sone rotten, sone hot, sone colde,
sone done. sone repented, the wordes of
auncient and wyse men are oftentimes
heard among vs, but little regarded of
any: they haue set downe this for a rule
*Quod semel faciendum, diu deliberā-
dū*: whatsoeuer is but once to be done,
and once done, neuer agayne to bee vn-
done, doth alwayes require greate de-
liberation, and long to be considered of
before; but the Elephāt being a hounge
and brutish Beast without reason, doth
better

Idle Inuentions.

better obey and follow this rule by nature, then we hauing reason can by oft and continual perswasions: for hee knowing by nature, that if once he chaunce to fall downe he must neuer loke to rise agayne, doth loke so narrowly to his footing, as he neuer setteth step without greate deliberation: when the naturall rest of sleepe comes vpon him, he gets him presctly vnto some tree, and therto leaning himselfe so taketh his rest. And is the fall of the Elephant greater to y^e earth, then the fall of a man into a curst Xantippa, or into the handes of an egregious shrew: verily I thinke it can not possibly be, is it not then needful for the man to looke with the Elephant, twise aboute him before hee leape: the wyse man sayth insipientis est dicere: &c it is a greate shew and token of an vnwyse man, when you hear him say, if I had knowen this or if I had knowen that, for if rashlye he bee sped, it is the best wisdome quietly to whist himself. I remember a familiar example of a very wyse and playne man in the countrey

they, who for his patience in bearinge
that kind of affliction, hath bene kept
a long tyme in remembraunce: hee and
hys wyfe keeping continuallye so close
together, as sometyme fast tyde toge-
ther by the eares: vnderstandinge the
place and tyme appoynted, where such
a famous and learned manne shoulde
preach, they agreed in due time louigly
to goe together arme in arme, and
cheeke by cheeke, pressing so in that lo-
uing maner as nere to the Preacher as
possibly they coulde. And after a whyle
the Preacher entringe into greate dis-
course of many matters, seruing fit for
his text, among diuers other thinges
fell into speech how Christ beare hys
crosse, and after many learned and god-
ly exortatiōs opened therein, he remem-
bred the sayinge in the scripture: Who
soeuer wil bee my seruant, must take
vp his crosse and follow me: at which
words this honest man hauing his wife
arme in arme, as though sharply pricke
with a sodayne motion, sayd immediat-
lye vpon a sodayne vnto the Preacher:
Sir

Idle Inuentions.

So, that will I with all my harte,
and ther vpon presently hoisting vp his
wyfe vppon his shoulders as well as he
coude, with al speede began to depart,
but the preacher and the rest of the con-
gregatiō, blamīg him as little for that
his zealous and godlye mynde, as they
greatly maruayled at that his strange
& rare example, caused him to be staide
and eased of hys heauy burden, and af-
ter this the preacher proceeding to hys
purpose, and finishing his Sermon, he
caused this honest man and his wyfe to
brought before him in the presence of y
whole congregation, and knowing him
by report to be a very wyse mā, demaū-
ded openly of him the cause of this so-
dayne motion: he boldly and openly an-
swared him. Why syr was it not your
saying, that he that wil be the serua nte
of God, must do as chyst did, in takinge
vp his crosse & following him, and that
our crosse that we most beare, is y tro-
bles and afflictions of this worlde: the
preacher answered him it was true, &
so was the saying of the scripture, then
sayd

sayd the honest man, if this bee true I hope I haue not offended, if I wil be a seruant vnto God, I must needes carie some crosse, and troubles of this world for I haue hard, that Nullus sanctorū coronatus sine flagello vel certamine, and for my part I haue no other crosse, nor trouble in this world but only this my deare wyfe, who is as diuillish a dame, as curst a shrew, as madd a makin as euer yuld man by bearde, and if you haue any other crosse to tell mee of then her, which I must beare, I hope God wil pardon mee, and so must you, for I know I shal not be able to liue to endure þ burchē. I liue (God knowes) full hardly and wearely with this. The preacher sayd vnto him: honest man I know you are counted wise, I find it is for your honest and good behauiour þ you be so wel esteemed of, and not for any gret knowledge or vnderstāding which I thynke you will clayme vnto your selfe: it semeth you haue better vnderstanding in your husbandry, in your occupation, or in some other handcraft, what

Idle Inuentions.

What soeuer it is, then you haue in the knowledge of any Diuine reasons, but liuing honestly and wel (as appears by your good report) and being so willing and diligent to geue care vnto your teacher, in that I know euery man cannot be a cunninge clarke (for then manye a theefe should escape the Gallous) I do fynde the lesse cause to blame you, but rather I am to instruct you according to the truth, which is my office & to bestow my tyme in teaching the ignorant people. Therfore you must vnderstand that to beare the crosse and troubles of this world, it is not to beare them vpon your shoulders, but you must beare the; that is, you must indure them, and take them with a quiet and patient mynde, & as a punishment sente from God, for your sinnes. then sayde the honest man vnto him againe. Sir, I confesse my ignorance, and do wish that I hadde more knowledge, as for your counsaile I wil willingly follow as nere I can, my coming was to the same purpose: but whereas you say, I must not take nor beare

beare the worldye afflictions vpon my
 shoulders, but indure them w a patient
 mynde. I say that if you had my wife,
 or such an other but for one yeare, you
 should fynd, you must not onely indure
 with a patient mynde, but you should al-
 so haue ynough to doe, to beare of both
 with head, shoulders, back, & legges,
 and euery other part of your body: ther-
 fore, sir, you speake well, and lyke one
 of great learning but of litle experiēce,
 and God forbid that you should haue y
 like experience herein as I haue found,
 and perhappes many other. The prea-
 cher makinge hast to bee gone, and lea-
 uinge anye further at that tyme to ex-
 hort hym, sayde, at his departure: ho-
 nest man (as it seemeth) you are won-
 derfully incumbrd with a merualous
 curst and diuillish shewe, farr worse as
 appereth most true, then the common
 sorte of shewes, for they bee all tolle-
 rable ynough, and by this your report
 which beareth indeed some credit, being
 so honest a man, I must needs say, this
 wyse

Idle Inuentions.

wyfe of yours is intollerable . therefore you may do well for your more quiet, & better ease, to seke some lawful sepeta- tion betwixte you, and that is the beste counsayle that I, or any man els in this case canne geue you : for though I haue no experyence, yet by reason I fynd there is no stryuinge with a diu- lish dame. I hope there bee not manye such in the worlde , and so I leaue you.

Then sayde the other agayne, for all your good counsayle hetherto I harte- ly thanke you . But now whereas at þ wynding vp, you seme to geue me cou- sayle to leaue my deare wyfe. Which is onely the crosse I haue in this worlde, wherby I must goe in þ worlde to come to lyfe euerlasting . I thinke your doc- trine therin not to my best commoditie, and then taking his wyfe by the hande, sayd vnto her , come wyfe, lette vs goe home togeather agayne, as louingly as wee came forth: and since I haue now learned that thou art the only mean to brynge mee to heauen. I will now che- rish thee more then euer I did before.

But

but I hope I shall not neede: for if I
do by chaunce sometyme forget you, I
hope you wil not forget your selfe, and
now because you fynd that I haue some
greater care of you, then heretofore I
would be loth you should now seeke, by
pensiuenes to shorten your owne lyfe,
for then I may be thought to kill you in
kyndnes. In this order during his lyfe
did this wyse manne content himselfe,
with hys vnadvised and hasty choysse.
Hore hast then good speede is neuer to
be liked, soft fyre maketh swete malt,
but to take hast after another sēce, they
say a hasty man maketh a hasty womā,
a gentle and soft manne doth alwayes
make a soft and gentle woman: the ha-
sty man in rebuking his wyfe openlye.
resembles him that spys into þ winde
and receyues it agayne bypon his face:
but perhappes you wil say that none be
of that mynd but women: ycs truely it
is the mynd of many wyse men: for exā-
ple sake, loke wher you can fynd a wise
man, that to the sight of the world, and
in very deede will not allowe his wyfe

C

to

Idle Inuentions.

to be mayster when she list, and then on the other syde, looke where you can find a foole whose wife will not tremble to speake, and be affrayd to loke asyde of any man in y^e presence of him. The wise scholmayster sayth, it is neuer meete to keepe that child in to much awe & feare which by nature is so gentle & tractable as the mildnes of his face, doth alwaies confesse his fault, and euen so sayth the wyse man of the woman, that sh^er yeelding alwayes y^e man to be her head, and by nature commonly subiecting herself willingly vnto hym, it were a greate fault to keepe her also in continual subiection, and therfore amonge wyse men it is alwayes taken for a rule, the humble must euer be exalted: among the other sort they must be contented to bee alwayes opp^{re}sed, and troden downe, yet sometyme wee see the most harebrayne of all is surely pokt, and stopt with the goose from creepinge through euery hedge, or scarce to goe out of anye narrow dole.

But

But looke which way wee will, eyther one waye or other, to what sence soeuer this woorde wast is best & most fittest to bee wrested (vnlesse that it be a hasty pudding) I cannot possiblye ymagine or thinke whiche waye, or by what meanes it canne well bee allowed of.

¶ Wee dayly see by commō experince hasty men neuer wante woe, and what thing soeuer is done with ouer much hast, is commonly repented by leasure.

¶ Therefore & y^e, I will not at this tyme fall sodaynlye into the depth of my desyre here at thys tyme with you, for pleasures sake onely: since it is the first tyme of our meeting togeather, by your patience we wil walke a little togeather by the waye: and sith that time doth serue vs both so well, I would bee gladde to craue your shor^t opinion herein. I haue harde it a question. (beyng dyuers tymes my selfe in companie) whether it is better to bee ydle, or to be ill occupped.

Idle Inventions.

Student.

Friend ydlenes, not onelyke but possi-
haue bene in companye where this and
many other lyke friuolous questions
haue commonly bene canuased to and
fro, and nothing at all vsfit for your e-
ducation. But if I should take vpon me
to answer this your question, and
yeeld a reason of some betternes in the
one of your propositions, I hadd neede
to pul some logition by the sleec, as
you haue done mee, and craue his ad-
uyce, as you intende to do myne: for as
I take it in this your question is inclu-
ded an equiuocall and doubtfull sence,
which requircth the artificial tooles of
Logicke, to make it smooth and playne
as wel to the eare as to the eye, and I
meane not at this tyme to wade to far,
and so wantonly with you, I will take
your wordes as the lye: and as by com-
mon attendment they are to bee taken,
and so shall you bryefly heare myne opi-
nion according to your desire: you are
not to learne, that one question may be
answered by puttig forth an other: ther
fore my

Idleness.

If I may be bolde to interupt your
E 3 talke

Idle Inuentions.

talke, how would you behaue your self
if this question were demaunded, of
you in the presence of such who haue no
artificiall skyll in reasoning at all, as if
you were amonge a number of women
would you not swaue a whitt from
art, and fall to some vayne and ydle rea-
sones you knowe full well that they are
neuer brought by eyther in Logicke or
Rethoricke.

Therefore amonge them, eyther you
must talke according to their vndersta-
dinge, or els continuallpe bee scilente,
which would argue much ignorance,
or rather great dulnes in you.

Student.

If I were in companie of neuer so
many, I confesse I could haue very lit-
tle to say, I do but I shouide be as the
Dule amōg a number of birdes, rather
amazed to heare theire continuall chir-
ping, then any waye able to answere
such kynd of questions.

Idlenes,

W. H.

Idle Inventions 24

Why sir, and would you also lye as
the Dule doth, vppon your backe, and
crye too witt, too woo? I woulde wish
you rather to lye grouelyng vpon your
belly to hyde your bashful face.

Student

May frend inuierpe, I am no crooked
byld byrde, I mynd not so to crye, ney-
ther to fall forward nor backward, the
place should be very slippery if I kept
not my footing, and besides, I woulde
not grratly sticke to endeuoꝝ my selfe to
peeld the best reasons I coulde to feede
theire phantasies, but I am not yet a-
mong them, we may talke therof at lea-
sure: I am now onely in þ cōpany of an
idle pack, & haue graūted to debate som
matters w you, according to our 2 fan-
tasies at this tyme alone. And therefore
now to proceed: towards the end of my
answer vnto your headles question, I
must put you in mynd of a sentence out
of Tully, for beyng as I haue sayd, that
your question is of two evils, we must
proue which is the least, and not þ best,
for saith he, duorū malorū minimū ma-
lum est elegendum. of

Idle Inuentions.

of two euilles the least is alwayes to be
chosen.

Idlenes

Once agayne you must pardon me, I
must be bold to interrupt you. You say
it is the sayinge of a wise man, that of
two or many euils the least is alwayes
to be chosen: surelye that your speech
doth fall out verpe well at this tyme to
serue my turne: for euen now am I to-
ward a wyfe, and I haue stood in great
doubt a long tyme with my selfe, whe-
ther were better to chose a bigge boun-
ser, or a litle lowbitchgroūd: but by this
your speech I fynde now the ende of my
doubte. Nowe surely I wil seeke out
the least woman that possiblye may bee
founde in a cuntrey: and if I may fynde
such a one as may serue my turne, and
pet skāt able to reach bp to my midle, I
wil thinke I haue found the most preti-
ous iewel in the world: for of two euils
you say the least is alwayes to bee cho-
sen.

Stu-

Student.

Why friend Nimblechaps me thinks
you seeme rather ready to play with
shadowe of euery thing then wi ling to
vnderstand the Substantiall matter in a-
ny thing: can you rightly gather vpon
my speech that a woman is euill: if you
do well vnderstande mee, you shal finde
nothing lesse, but rather that shee is for
the most parte one of the greatest good
thinges in this world, and most necessa-
ry of any thing els besydes.

Idlenes.

Syz in what I spake of a woman
I bilt no part of my speech vpon yours
I bilt only vpon my owne ground, your
speech was but an introduction vnto
me: but if it be as you say in your coun-
trei (as for all countreyes I am sure,
you haue not trauailed) then do your
countrey and myne greatly differ: for
where you say, she is one of the greatest
goods

Idle Inuentions.

goods in the worlde, there is this olde saying with vs. *Femina rara bona, sed si bona digna corona*, a woman is so seldome and so rarely good, that when she is good indeede, she is worthy to wear a crowne of gold: and besides, wher you say, she is most necessary of any earthly thing. that soundes something like one way to bee true: for wee haue an other old saying with vs, that drawes verpe neere vnto that purpose, which is this that fire, water, and a woman be thre of the most necessary euils in the world. with many other lyke olde sayinges, which were to long to bring in questiō.

Student

If al your many, other lyke old, and diuistical sayings be like vnto these two, none of them all would bee worthe the repeting, for of these the one is meerlye false, the other not rightly vnderstoode: for wheras you say, that fire, water, & a woman, be thre necessary euils: that is cleane contrary, for they be thre of the necessary goods in this world, for preserving and keepinge of mans lyfe,
and

and besides by common reason it is a thing very vnceasable, that any euill thing can bee necessarye. it is rather a thing to be thought necessary, that there were no euill at all: but in way of reasoning some wil say, that good beares not his name but in respect of euil, and how should good be knowē if euil were not, and that one cōtrary doth alwayes set forth, and shew an other, & therefore necessary with many other stronger reasons then here can bee made, yet they shal be but arguments of deceit, for as black is a colour of it selfe wout white & white wout bearinge seueral names for knowledge of the one from the other, euen so is good a vertue of it selfe without euil, and euil a vyce of it selfe without good. Therfore I haue sayd no euil can any way be necessary and now since a woman by your confessiō is necessary how wil your rusty sentences make her to be an euil? my friende, you may see howe your olde sayinges (a number of them, by cōtinuance of time be so greatly corrupted, as most of the, bearing a show

Idle Inuentions.

How of truth, in that they be olde) are
perp false. And nowe as to your other
sentence, Fem. rar. bon. sed si bon. dig.
coron. your interpretation hercin is
cleane contrary to the true meaninge.
For rightly it is thus to be vnderstood
A womā is a rare good (that is to say)
so rare a good thing, as the like is hard-
ly, or not at al to be found againe in this
world, but if good, worthy of a crown
of Gold: that is thus to be vnderstoode
on the other side, that (since in euerye
kynd there be alwayes some which bee
euil) if the woman bee good (shee is so
necessary) she is the most worthy to be
had in greate estimatiō befoze all other
earthly thinges, and therfore it is sayde
shee is worthy to be crowned, and now
my thinks tyme growes away very fast
I hope we neede not continue any lon-
ger in these your slippes, and wanton
bywayes leading cleane from our pur-
pose, you may finde how rashlye you
haue bene ready to conceaue amisse: &
therfore now once agayne to enter into
your

your question if you will suffer mee to
proceed: as I haue sayd of two euilles
the least is to be chosen, and now which
is the least euill, to bee ydle or to be yll
occupied, that must bee our question: &
for this tyme I thynk myne opiniõ wil
draw very neere vnto your good liking:
If or in my conceypt of the twayne, to be
ydle is the least euil, and yet I must a-
gree, that ydlenes is the mother of all
mischiefe, the roote of all sinne the hād-
mayd of the deuill, and the deuils stael,
as the oule is for the byrder vnder his
lyme bush or hydden nett. But to way
according vnto common reason so long
as a man is ydle hys mynd is occupied
about nothing of effect, eyther good or
bad, and during that tyme in quality he
very much resembleth the Jacke daw,
whose nature is beyng the most unhap-
py and ydle headed byrde that flies, con-
tinuallye to plucke strawes from some
thatcht house or other, snapping at eue-
ry flie which comes in his way, or ram-
ming of euery litle cranny he fyndes to
some baggagely stufte. If or when shall
you

Idle Inuentions.

you see the ydle man : but eyther he is
doynge his neighbour, or next stander by
some petty mischiefe, catching at flies,
playing with straws vnder his fete,
champing them with his teeth, or els
busied about some other like ydle occu-
pations: beyng ydle the mynd alwayes
runneth wildly about after euerie ro-
ling glint of the eye, and beinge well
markt, it makes the man appeare as if
he were mad, and beyng long continu-
ed oft tymes it bynges him to madness
indeede. for then he is a ready host and
fit receptacle to entertayne all wicked
imaginacions, & hath stable romth plen-
ty for the deuill, & as many hors s as he
wil byng, and whether you think y de-
uill daunsing vppon horsbacke within a
man wil make him mad or no, I leaue it
to your iudgement: we may learne by a
familiar example of a simile: daylye in
experien e among vs, that greate inco-
ueniēce both come by ydlences For loke
vnto those places where greate infecti-
ons of plagues and other lyke diseases
do raygne: haue you not continuallye
there the aduyce of wyse & learned phi-
sitions

otions, in any case neuer to goe abroad
 to an empty & ydle stomacke (lest infec-
 tiō synding it empty comes in & take his
 place filling it ful of filchy corruption, &
 therby byngeth your body soner to de-
 cay: they wish vnto euery man a thunge
 most easy alwayes ready to bee hadd) a
 cup of ale & a tost in a morninge. which
 hath euer bene thought very holesome,
 & good to kepe the stomacke occupied,
 though continuall tipling ale knightes
 in places of misrule do greatly someti-
 mes abuse it: yet of it self being mode-
 ratly takē it is neuertheles to be allow-
 ed, & it is worthy of cōmendation, as ap-
 peareth by this old verse following: sa-
 nat, confortat, exhilarat nobilis ala, &
 dat iucundū, nappalis ala viruū. Thus
 you may se to kepe your body in perfect
 health, it is þ most necessary thinge þ is
 required at your handes, to kepe it still
 from emptines: & even so is it w your
 mynd, if you wil kepe it in good order,
 admit as seldom as you cā þ cōpany of
 ydlenes: for beyng ydle you are like a
 man þ knoweth a number of mad men
 to

Idle Inuentions.

to stand in a place with naked swordes
in their handes and yet venters sharke
naked among them and so is killed; and
woulde you not iudge this wilfull man
guilty of his owne death? surely hee is,
and although hee cannot liue agayne to
this worlde to receaue worldy punish-
mēt, for that his so haynous offence, yet
in hell hee is sure to hange, which is a
place of punishment euerlasting for all
such like obstinate, desperate, and wic-
ked offenders and euen so is it with you
when you are ydle, for then you hazard
your selfe thus far, you know full well
that beyng ydle if the deuil be not with
you presently, he wil not long tary fro
you: and then if obstinately you will still
continue in ydlenes, and make him a-
way to creepe further and further, into
your heade, and so at length to possesse
your whoie bodye, are not you then as
guilty of your owne death as he which
kylles hymselfe: if you continue so long
in ydlenes, til the deuil (creeping so clo-
ly as you can neuer perceaue him) be-
gins

gins to dip in his foot, then surely you are almost past remedye: but you may sometyme perchance bee ydle, and yet presently fall to some exercise agayne, and then it wil be the lesse hurtful vnto you, so long as no vice hath taken possession: and now by this means, since ydlenes is but a possibility to praiue a man to wicked sin: and the other, which is to be ill occupied, is a sinne in act already committed, though (as I haue sayd) they be both so naught as neuer to be allowed: yet of the two in myne opinion ydlenes is the lesse euil.

Idlenes

Now truly say, my goodwill standes vpon thornes, till it hath yeilded due thanks according to your deserved curtesye, and were it not for the common prouerbe which daily is had in remembrance, that to much of anye thinge is starke naught, I would doubtles spend some tyme wherein it should appere, I should not bee myndful of this your friend.

Idle Inuentions.

freely couſaile: but knowing your haſt
vnto other affayres, leaſt I ſhould kepe
you to long, I will brieſlye proceed ac-
cording to the firſt cauſe of my commig
vnto you: and therefore now fir, this is
þ other matter, wherin I am to craue
your aduiſe.

The lively and cunminge workman-
ſhip in the forme and fauoure of a man,
ſo far paſſeth, and excelleth all earthlye
and artificiall ſkill, as it is not meete
to be named in any ſpeech of compariſon,
with any earthly or worldly thing: and
therefore here I dare but faintly ſpeake
therof: yet for experience and learning
ſake, let me be bould here at this tyme
to craue this one thing of you, to ſingle
out and choſe ſecretlye vnto your ſelfe
þ moſt amiable and well fauoured face
that poſſibly may be ſeene, with the ra-
reſt and moſt cumly parſonage that by
any meanes can be found, admitting þ
workemanſhip of nature ſo perfectly ſet
forth in hi, as not to be reprehẽdable, ſo
much as in one title touchig c his forme
& beautye, and then (committinge your
exter:

external cēses, to the cumlines & beauty of his outward parsonage to scilēce) conuay þ secret insight of your profound iudgement into þ inward partes of the said cumly man, & if there after a while hauing made sufficient scrch and viem in euerý corner, you fynd þ nature hath not so much as vouchsafte one dram of wit in his head, nor so much as on good qualite in his mynd, I praye you then dissemble not your conceipt in him, but tel me playnly how you woulde esteeme of the man.

Student

Your request is verye reasonable, though somthing hard, yet not so hard as necessary to be vnderstood: I accompe it hard because (though nature beareth þ name) God is the cheefest workman, of this most cunning and skilful peece of worke, which here you haue described. Therfore if sodainly I should geue any rash iudgemēt therin, my such vnadvised answer woulde procure þ lesse credit vnto my speech. But to satisfy your request, my opinion is this: Admittinge

Idle Inuentions.

him to be according to your description: wel fauored and comely of personage, if therewith he hath neyther wit, nor anye one commendable or skilful quality besides, yet you ought not any thinge at all to despyse him: for though he differs perhaps greatly from you in beauty & fauour, and somethinge in comelines of shape (wherin he far excelleth you) and you perhaps differ likewise from him as greatly in witt with many skilful & cunning qualities of the mynde, wherein on the other side you do as farre passe and goe beyond him. Yet in truth you be both made of one mould, and he that gaue vnto hym that comely parsonage & shape of man could as wel haue geuen him the vnseemliest shape, and forme of the most vglyest beast in the worlde, fro whō also your great giftes of wisdome and vnderstanding, both likewise procede, whom as wel he could haue made a very natural foole. and therefore to be short, though (hauing entred according to your request into the bowelles, and inward partes of this man) I do plainly see

Idle Inventions

31

ly se that wisdom & those qualities to
be wantinge in hym, which do flow in
you, and that goodly and cunlye perso-
nage which is in hym, to be lykewyse
wanting in you: yet I can no way see a-
ny great difference of estimation which
rightly and lawfully cā be had oꝝ made
betweene you: he is as p. rite a man in
euery part ether oꝝ outwardly oꝝ inward-
ly. to serue that intent and purpose, for
the which he was made as you, and you
as hee.

Idleness.

Sir (not in maner as reprehending
you, but with most hartly thankes) you
haue troubled your self further then my
intent was in this motion at the first to
haue troubled you, & done more then I
durst desire you: my meaning was not
to haue craued your iudgemēt and opi-
nion in the dutiful & equal estimation,
which euerye man ought to beare one

f 3

toward

Idle Inuentions.

toward an other, in that wee be al brothers, and as children of one father: but according to the common course of the world (which is, as forreiners & strangers, euerye man to pull out his nexte neighbours throat, for the gayninge to himselfe a halfe penny) how here would you iudge he should be esteemed.

Student.

As for my trouble it hath not bene greate, for your thanks I do as litle looke, and your mynde I do very well now vnderstand, and as for myne opinion in him accordig to the cōmon course of the world, it may so fall out, that you & I therin shal meete both in one mind, for the way is so playne as a blynd man almost may easily keepe y^e path I think hee shall bee taken and reputed in this worlde as a gaye and goodlye paynted sheath made at the fyrst for some choyse & special good mettalled kniues which now (by misfortune beyng lost, or rashly cast awaye) is ramde full of dytche wasse

broffe, and rotten stickes: or otherwyle
as a braue and lofty house, erected per-
happes at the first, and mayntayned
longe by some famous, wyle, and no-
ble Prelates, and now inhabited, by a
most infamous, ignoraunte, and base
packe of spendalles. Who certainly be
perswaded (bearyng so goodly a house
bypon there heads, though they haue
litle witte therin besydes: and commo-
ly as litle money in their purses) that
they bee all in such generall and great
estimation: as they iudge þ very birds
of the ayre, which by chaunce light vpon
their houses, comes of purpose to peeke
them honoꝝ.

Wheras of truth, if some liberall spa-
ring wyle mē were in their rountbes,
and by chaunce comittinge some such
wanton and prodigall oversight, they
would rather think to themselves, that
those byrdes came foꝝ to accuse them
of their vayne and prodigall folly. But
contrary to their such most ignoraunte
and blynde perswasions, the Worlde,
doth

Idle Inuentions.

doth altogether disallow, and condemne them t. ough perhaps nere vnto their such statelpe and gallante seats, many knauish, dissembling & flattering marchauntes, wil subctlye geue them many a cap and legge, more for there meat and drinckes sake, then eyther for loue or feare, which the prodigall man doth seldome see or vnderstand, nor yet doth remember the old prouerbe, no craft to the clouted shoo, which (but by þ graue wyle, pollityke, and liberall sparinge mē) neuer was nor euer shal be kept in any good or peaceable order, where one blynde man leadeth an other, they both tumble commonly into some dyke, wher two or many fooles be, and one of them appoynted to ouersee an other. They neuer leaue scratching or byting. Wher among many ignorantes that haue smal vnderstanding, as litle wit, & lesse knowledge in any thinge at all, one of them notwithstanding doth alwaies guide, & teach an other, how can they finde, or if as blynd men by chaunce they stumble vppon and finde, how can they keepe þ right

right & playn way, vnto what place soe-
uer they seeke: what ioy would ther be
(thinke you) among the pore bitching
boyes, and grammer schole children, if
it might be lawfull for one of them to
gouerne and teach an other, how ioyful
would they be if they might haue more
maysters then one or two, or halfe a do-
sen: for then many a waghalter would
be in good hope, that when one of his
maysters for some offence should goe a-
bout to bitch him, some of the o-
thers perhappes for affections sake wil
laboure as fast to saue him, wherof be-
yng deuided, they may fall into some
tarre among them selues, and thereby
the vnhappy wagg may happily escape
a scowring. Truly to be short, I think
in euerpe thinge, one ignorantye must
needes leade an other ignorantlye, one
blynd man doth leade an other blyndly,
one foole an other foolishly: packe and
put to geather many crafty and subtil
men, ther shall be nothing but diuising
continually to wrangle, and one to de-
ceane an other: knitt likewyse to toge-
ather

Idle Inventions.

ather a knotte of knaues, you shall see nothing but cosnage, quarellig, brawling and fighting. Perhaps you wil say to me, then ioyne wyse men together, and they no doubt must needs very wel agree: but the corruption of this world is such, as I fynd by experieñce (though it be agaynst reason, in that wisdome is so sure and perfect a guide vnto them) that they wil oftentymes, and greatly iarre. But where you wil haue þ wisdome and pollecy of man to beare anye sway, place him not to gouerne and commaund his equals, and much lesse his superiours. But whom is hee to commaund and rule: let him bee in place of auctoryty aboue them, and then cyther for feare or loue they wil obey him. Admit the chiefe captayne in a fielde of equal countenaunce, auctoryty, and rule with manye of his Souldiers, thinke you that they would lōg agree. I think rather that the whole campe by theire continual disagreementes, that I am in as greate auctorytye as thou: and I as thou, would very easily and soone be ouer.

uerthrowen, and therfore according to
wisedome and pollicy, one cheefe & head
scholmayster in euery schole, doth al-
waies and only bear the greatest sway,
though somtime he hath diuers others
vnder hym: one chief gouerner and ru-
ler in euery field (though with many
vnder captaines and petty leaders) and
not without great counsayl of wyle and
experte men, doth alwayes beare the
sword of rule; and euen so in euery like.

But wher you would haue þ blind
man wel ledd, let his leader be of per-
fite and sound sight, wher you wil haue
the crafty dissemblinge, and subtile man
the simple fooles, the veriest knaues, þ
common clouted shooes, and all o-
ther sortes what so euer, kept in their
dutyfull due, and cunlye good order,
I woulde not haue you couple togea-
ther like to like, though the olde say-
ynge may bee hadde in remembraunce.
Simile amat simile, for it is most com-
monly proued to be true, that man oftē-
tymes loueth that, which commonly
doth him most harme.

But

Idle Inuentions.

But commit them vnder the gouernment and rod of the most grauest, wyse, and polittick vschers that possi: ly may be found. Wherby the more likety you shall keepe them in awe: and thus my friend to finish my answere vnto your question, as hear you may perceauc, þ great wisdomē and graue gouernmēt is not onely needfull and requisite, but very necessary for the mayntenaunce of euery godlye & gorgious house, and as well for the gouernment of a common welth, and that no man (haue he neuer so gallant or braue a seate) is esteemed in this world and common wealth worthy of rule, honor, and dignity, vntlesse hys wysedome and pollicy in good gouernment be agreeable therunto, euen so is it with your wellauored and parsonable man, which accordinge to your discription wanteth both witte and all good qualittes.

Idlenes.

Sir you haue not now only resolved mee

me of my question but you haue entred
(according to your saying y we shoulde
both meete in a mynde) into the verpe
same path wherein I my self had deter-
mined to walke before a turn or two: for
though my question was of a most wel-
sauored and strayght limbe man, yet b
cause therof was this outward gorgi-
ous, & inwarde naked house, which you
haue here decribed, wherof intending
to vse some speach vpon a sentente of y
most famous and learned oratour M.
T Cicero. I thought good to be bould
first to creepe (by the sayd simile of the
man) into some part of your iudgemēt
therin: wherin now with moske harpe
thanks you haue verpe wel serued my
turne

Student.

If I haue any way pleased you, I
am very glad. but whereas it seemeth
by your wordes, your intent was to vse
some speach, let not anye thinge that I
haue sayde, hinder or stay your procee-
ding

Idle Inuentions.

for if it be well or any thinge tollerable
I wil allow therof: if othertwyse I wil
wish it amended.

Idlenes,

Sir nothing doubting of your friendly
acceptaunce and good counsaile: this is
the sentence whereupon I first groun-
ded my purpose and intente.

M. T. Cicero.

*Non domo dominus, sed domi-
no domus honoranda est.*

Idlenes

VWho list to build a lofty house,
intending there a portly state
Had neede lay vvel his vvits in souse,
to keepe them fresh vvithin his pate.

A pouldring tub if rightly vsd,
and scafond duely to his kinde:

VWhich

Y Which alwayes yeeldes his liquor sweeter
and please the tast of euery mynd.

For buildinges braue be eas'ly made
but hardly then they be mayntaind,
If not by trickes of wisdoms trade,
which teach vayne toyes to be refrainde,

But he that should such toyes set downe
as wisdoms wish we should not vse,
Might see him selfe in folly drowne
in that most men would him refuse

For vvhoe sees not the vvhorld is bent
to pompe and prayse in euery thing,
And nothing vvell if vviseely spent
hath eyes, but they be flattering.

Concepts of cost, vvithout measure,
are now so grovven into delyte,
As vvhere no toy there no pleasure,
vvhich please the vvanton sight;

Therefore synce we haue wealth at vvill
and tyme in pleasure minde to spende,
To haue of our delites our fill,
let vs our selfe to feasting bend.

And

Idle Inuentions.

And nowv howv shall this pleasant day
or drousey if it so befall,
Be brought to end and past away?
Good cheere sayth some is best of all,

And then nowv vvwhether shall vve sayle,
to him sayth one, vvwhere daynty fare
And delicates do neuer sayle.
nor yet of cost is any spare.

For there a vvorld of vvanton vvightes
vve shall not misse, but fynde most braue
VVe can not vvish for more delightes
then there at all tymes, vve may haue.

VVe shall not there be bid vvelcome
to such poore fare as vve shall fynde,
Nor yet see thinges onely handsome,
but passing fyne of euery kynd.

For biese, veaie, mutton, pork or souce,
geese capons, hens vvith all such like;
They feede the seruantes in the house,
and all of Dayntyes vve must picke,

VVith fausy fallers of al sortes

Of

of cast pleasaunt, with cost plenty,
VVberof an hundred by reportes,
will hardly one man satisfy.

No common bread we shall neede eat,
by castles, towers, and towncs of golde
In sugar paste, with cost so great
as sildome hath the like bene tould

Nor yet neede we drinke ale or beere,
choyse of VVines be there so plenty,
And dainty lippes fit for such cheare
that house is neuer longe empty.

Therefore now let vs (as I say)
since tyme of pleasure serues so well
Goe passe away this pleasant day
with him that beares away the bell.

Student.

Oh friend I sigh to heare your vayne,
and how this vvanton vvorld is bent
To bring a virtue in disdayne,
which is vvhen vv wealth is vv wisely spent.

For then it ought to be of right,

accompted

Idle Inuentions,

accompted liberality
V When otherwise in wisdomes fight
it is but prodigality,

If this which you haue sayd be true
as seemes experience hath you taught
V Wisdom might make your hart to rue,
that you so oft such vice haue sought;

Idlenes,

V Why syr, say you thus oh to this,
as though it were a payne to heare
Young men delight in fantasies
with honest mirth and daynty cheare,

Student

Truely it is thought a payne
to all wile men that euer wrote
That heads so young should bear their brain
to stroy such as they spy to dore:

For wisdom vvarneth vs to reach
the ignorantes how to auoyde
Destruction, yea vracke, or breach
elpying them therewith annoyde

And not to trippe the blynd man downe,

Idle Inuentions

38

With ioy to see him tumbling there
For so you may deserue the crowne
of knaury vvhich many vveare,

The vvhich I vvould be loth to see
my friend should vveare as token playne
Of folly fyxt in him to bee.
vvhich vwith the vvise bread great disdayne

But since vve be all vvell agreed
to passe sometime in pleasant cheare
VVe vvil not seeme to hunt for neede
nor yet to buy our sport so deare

That vwith returne our friendes shall see
our credits are so crackt vwith shame
As some sweete syrupe suckers be.
for then of right deserue vve blame,

Such vvanton steppes vve vvil not tread,
as to allure our friendes to charge.
Since captayne Vanity such doth leade
as loue to cloy their friends at large

For by such ioyes as you haue namd,
it is vvell knowne that many men
Of much greate vvealth haue bene so lamde,
as now to begging they must leane.

G 2.

VVho

Idle Inuentions.

VWho therefore vvill be partener,
vvith such vayne vvanoring heads at all,
Must thinke himfelfe the vvorthier
to beare such blame as doth befall,

But if you vvill take my aduyfe,
vvith such delightes as I thinke good
VVe vvill not chuse our fare so vile,
nor yet such Ofe of vvanton mood.

The auntiet house vve all knowv vvel,
vvhich Shoring standes vppon the hill,
VWhere such vv ere euer vvont to dvvel,
as alvvayes had their vv it at vv ill:

They euer tooke delite to leane
vnto the faying of the vvife,
That measure is a meary meane
and please al men of honest guife,

VWhich hath them taught to guide so right,
that house in hofpiality,
As come or goe by day or night,
they vv il not feed your iolity

But for all plenty of good fare,
no place to bountye more is bent,
You fhall not there tynd difhes bare

Idle Inuentions.

39

For yet see want of what is spent

As for pastimes, with pleasures fit,
for gentlemen both young and gild,
You can not wish by any wit,
more meate, if you be wisely bould.

And can your wittes so wind at will,
as to be fit at each rebound.
To mayne with some prety skill
the balke of wit which cost is round.

For there you shal not only haue
your hunger fed with holesome cheare,
But you shal fynd delight to craue
such pleasures oft to see and heare.

It is not like your gluttons fare
which happily lasteth for a yeare
For here a wise man rules with care,
and scrapes away all folly cleare.

Therefore since now we be so light
as vapors, which the sunne draves vp
To be allured by weather bright,
let vs first drinke of follys cup.

And

Idle Inuentions.

And then it all agree thereto
this ydle tyme to passe away,
As marchpaine mouthed wantons do
vve vvil soone spend this pleasaunt day

And thus vvee see in every place
most men to this haue greate desire.
V Vith vvhoe shall show the lustiest face
in costly, fyne, and braue attire,

V Which yeeldes them honor as they thinke,
in places vvhoe they be not knowne
And so from place to place they flinke.
and vveares perhaps more then their owne

V Vherby such thankles gluttons feede
themseloes ful oft in many a place
V Where many such as haue more neede
dare not for shame once shew their face,

For he that vveares not cloth of gould
vvith satten, veluet, or such like
Must not among such gayer be bould,
as though he should his mates there seeke

V Vhen he perhaps that vveares his cote
most playne is oft the better man,
V Which vvise men alwayes vvell do note:
and yet mend none do vvhat they can.

Bue

Idle Inventions.

70

But such as pedlers packes do beare
if they by vvealsh aduauced be
He that should spy them sitting there,
and tell them of this fond decree.

Might luckely leape to saue his head
from knockes, if they might him vvel reach
For that in steed of suger breade
he sliceth them such sorer leach.

And yet to end I do admit
the meanest man deserue may vvell
Among the best sometyme to sit
if vvealsh be vyonne by great trauell.

Or els by virtue of learning
vvhich dorth the meanest man of all
(As our experience dayly bring)
to honor high most easely call.

VVherto vvhether they aduauced be,
by force of virtues paynful trade.
They vvel deserue in their degree
such honor as by layves are made.

And yet from vvhence the vines do spring
of all virtues that euer were,
As in the scholes of deepe learning,
Great realōs swarme, vvhose best should beare.

Idle Inuentions.

But there they rest and all agree,
as bees vvhich buzze abroad awhile,
That learning wel deserues the fee
of honor great, vvith noble style.

And he vvwhose vvits most vvifely vvrest
nobility longest to preserue,
Must best be thought among the rest
of right his honor to deserue.

Idlenes



Tr, you haue nowe
double bound me by
dutie to gieve you
most hartpe thanks
that thus friendly you
haue bene contente
(for this short time)
to banish your selfe frō your so earnest,
grane, and profound studie, to accom-
pany me vvith your friendly conceipt in
these my dayne and ydle inuentions.
And therfore now lest I should so long
here at this tyme keepe you walkinge
vvith

with mee in this my path of vanity, as hereafter when wee shall haue like occasion to trouble you in crauinge your cōpany agayne, you shall be vnwilling to graunte the spendinge of any time (which is þ most precious iewel in the whole world) with such an endles busse, and ydle runninge brayne: I leaue heare at this tyme to trouble you any further, commending you vnto God, & to your seate and chayre of studie from whence you came.

Student

Friend Tolenes, though perhaps I am not so curious or coy in spending of my tyme for good fellowship and company sake, as you suppose and think me to be: yet I may not any waye blame you, but rather do very well allow of this your such ready conceipte, & reasonable speech, wher in you seeme not only vnwilling greatly to allure or incise me into any folly: But also as loth, long to hould or kepe mee in anye path
of

Idle Inuentions.

of ydolenes or vanity. For true it is, that notwithstanding most willingly hether-to, I haue concented to bestowe both tyme and speech accordinge to your request: yet as true it is, I would be very loth to consume or spende any longe tyme in such friuolous and bayne deuises. Thoughe for the companie of my frend I can somtyme be cōtent to wade w him in some sūoth, cleare & shallow flath of folly: yet I confesse I would be very loth to aduenture so far with him as to swim in any rough, darke, or bottomles pic or puddle of wicked & fylthe vice. I would bee loth with a kinge to drowne in follie, though with my meanest frend (as I haue sayd) I can bee content to wade therein: willingly I would not (if I could otherwyle chuse) goe to farre in any thing. But bearing alwayes in mynde the warninge of a wyle manne to leaue the Racke, and Gaunger, and to take a snatch and a waye, with small hyndraunce vnto any of my wayghety affayres. I can at anye
time

tyne in anye honest and cunlye tope
of delighte or pleasure, recreate my
selfe and accompany my frend.

But now as seemes vnto mee, per-
happes you haue an ydle and wanton
turne or two secretly to walke by your
selfe, wherein you would not haue mee
willingly behold your gesture: & there-
fore cunningly crauinge the riddaunce
of my companye (as though for feare of
offence) you commēd me to my chayre,
wherunto beyng verpe well content to
graunt you your such secreete, and cur-
sing request, I am as willing to goe,
and in likemanner as you commended
me vnto God, I also in the same friend-
ly manner, commiend you not vnto him
but to your owne inuention. Wishinge
you to remember your owne coun-
saile now in your selfe, & not to walke
so long in any your pathes of vanity.
Yet I doubtte verpe much (friende I-
dlenes) to dissuade you frō vanity, for
it wil most certaynly perswade a great
number to accuse mee of hayne follye,
and

Idle Inuentions.

and perhaps I may so deeply incurre a displeasure of so many as durynge lyfe euer after, (turne which way I will) the blame of my such folly shall stil continually be blowen in my face: for setting curiosity asyde, to be playne, when your thicke, and bushye beetle heade (in shape much like to a hedge hogge halfe vnclousing himselfe, and shewing his bare and naked face) lieth rowled vnder an aperne, and tumbling in your sweete harts and wantōs lay, busying the wabbling belclarppe of your so bayn and ydle body, so greatlye to her good lyking and pleasure enery way, as she seemeth not onely loth to leaue your company, but rather longing stil to continue her such pastyme, in playing with the soft and gentle prickes of that your rowlinge and ydle pate, and sometyme perhaps at your oft request and flattering intisement: peeling w her smoth and tender lips to honoꝝ your hard and brused mouth. If then (this merry gale of wynde, this stirring beewirte you, cuppling your ships to gether, and sayling

sayling outward in your voiage of delighte) you bluntly by chaunce shoulde
boulte oute this my friendly perswasion
(though secretly vouchsafed vpon you)
moning my speech the cause of your departure, vnto that your louing & wanton
mouse, and in the middest of al your pleasure offer so to departe, then shall
my secret, (though undeserued) & pinching paynes begin, then shall I be so
toste from tounge to tounge, from mouth to mouth, from place to place, and so
sharply and shrewishly shakē vp among
so many, as doubtles it were a thousand
 tymes better for any man, in the like
pitiful case among them (though not
as a dogge) to be tost in a blanket: they
will say, let olde graybeard keepe his
counsayle to himselfe. We will craue
at his hands, his graue aduise, whē we
thinke good: because now by continu-
ance of tyme, he is become from a clarke
to a parrish priest, could he now be con-
tent to haue no clarkes at all: could hee
now fynd in his hart to be reader, sin-
ger and belringer, and al in his parish
alone

Idle Inuentions.

alone, surely it were not amisse if hee were wel applyed, and kept to his tackle but one moneth, and then no doubt wee shall see him come creeping lastly home with weary limmes: and then if any man will offer to take a rope out of his hand, you shal see hee will be as ready & as willing to let it goe as euer he was in his life to take it vp: then shortly after, you shall heare he will as openly publish it, to be a deede of charitee to helpe the weake and surcharged mā, as he hath already secretly whispered in disallowing the wanton seruice of the stronge and yowthful bodyes, and then will confesse that a helping hand is neuer to be blamed, & espetially in those thinges which must needes be done.

Therefore waying wel the vanity of his speech, let vs not so easily parte, as to breake of all good company for a white hayre. Ifrend Idlenes I know this will be their saying: & besydes this, I know you haue many hāgers on, very diligēt & daily students, desirous to immitate you in this your yole art, and to learne
your

your cunning flaygbtes in rockinge in
 Venus lappe, pickinge in, and pick-
 yng out sometymes pinhes out of her
 pincase, thurning of apere strings &
 with many other ydle deuises: and ther-
 fore friend iniury, since in dissuadinge
 you accordinge to my former speech, I
 shal seeme to perswade many a thousand
 from that which they wil be verpe loth
 to leaue, and in so baynly wastinge my
 wynde shal appeare as much an ydle
 packe as the best, I recante my former
 perswasion, and thus do commend you
 only heare vnto your naturall, bayne, &
 ydle inuentions.

Idleness.

Sir you seeme so gamesome & plea-
 saunt in this your reply vppon my late
 and friendly farewell, as I thinke you
 could be content to remaine stil to me, ba-
 thing your selfe in this my laspe tub (as
 you terme it) and vessel of ydle vanity:
 therefore know this I am not so inclin-
 dnto þ vice of ingratitude, I haue bene
 so

Idle Inuentions.

vnkindly or so vnmannery brought vp,
that when any man friendly vpon good
wil, as though desirous of my compa-
ny, shal come vnto me, that then after a
whyle eyther by secret speeches or cur-
ning gestures, I wil seme so weary of
him, as rather desirous of his rounth
then of himselfe, for truly it is nothing
agreable eyther vnto my nature or to
my bringing vp and much lesse, when
I my selfe shall be first desirous of his
company. But I must confesse you are
blameles, though you did mistake me,
for you cannot be so wellacquaynted w
my nature and meanig in any thing: as
I am with the naturall disposition of
you, and of all y^e world besides: I agree
well with you, if I were according to
the common nature and disposition of
men, beyng in company w my friends
and familiars, I woulde sometymes
wish, and perhappes willingly craue
rather their rounth then their compa-
ny. For admitting I weee as other mē
bee, and as you your self in your yout-
full dayes heretofore haue bene: then
per-

perhaps and not unlike but it might be
with me as it hath bene with you & ma-
ny others, that some famous learned, &
skilfull Astronomer, hath latelpe bene
with me, and by his or her mysticall and
wonderfull straunge knowledge, hath
geuen me certaynly to vnderstand, that
such a tyme, day and hower, and in such
a place there shal without fayle appear
vnto me very secretly a glorious, braue
and goodly blasing starre: and that the
place where it shal appeare, must needs
be free, and cleere of al company, other-
wise it will shew it selfe but as a playne
and common star, without any blasing
or stemming at all. Perhaps I haue
appoynted secretly to see some tum-
bling cast, with some pleasant and me-
ry slayghtes of iugling trickes, and to
draw more nerer vnto natural & playne
vnderstanding, not unlike but I haue ap-
poynted to kis some pretty wench in a
corner: and now admittynge al this to be
true (as in many men it is daily scene,
would any of my friendes, or acquain-
tance blame me, to shew the cunningly

¶

some

Idle Inuentions.

om colour of desire to craue for a time rather their rounte then their company, I thinke none. There is also another kynde of people, which do likewise and very often cunningly craue the riddance of company, which be in þ English fraise, the cormugions and couetous carles of this worlde, their natural disposition is, fyrst to scramble and scratch together if he cā a liuing equal with the best yeman, gentleman, or squyre in his countrey, then stryuing to shroude himselfe vnder some ragged & little cottage, to serue no further then onely for necessity, or if a large or fayre house, then keeping his doores continually shut as though neuer at home. contenting hymselfe willingly, and all his household perforce with a sparinge and pinching dyet, doth chiefly feede and altogether delight himselfe wth the oft telling and cōtinual sight of his money, as young men commonly do themselves, in the sight of their louers. And now admit some young heads and merpe companions knowing his abilitie & vnderstanding

standing his miserable & beggerly mind
busying their brayns cunningly to work
him some flayghty, pretty, & slipry trick,
doe agree among themselves vpon some
high & festival day, knowing y^t the per-
haps he hath a pecce of biese, a calues
head or an oxe foote in y^e pot, & do appoint
a meeting of many neighbors y^e verie
same tyme to dyne with him, bidden by
a messenger in verie good & due order,
as though verie sollomly biddē by him:
then dinner time drawing nere, seruice
beyng done, & euery man departinge to
his house, this poore, miserable & wret-
ched miser doth sit stil in his seate fea-
ring greatly that if todaynly he should
thronge or presse out among the thickest,
some or other would so cunningly mi-
nister such occation of talke with him,
as eyther to shame him or els to inforce
him home to dinner, but after a whyle
looking of centynes backward ouer his
shoulder, and spyng some stil remay-
ning behynd, not musing a litle at y^e mea-
ning therof, at length riseth vp, & pulling
his cap in his eyes, passeth away by the

Idle Inuentions.

Breaking, as though he had nothinge to say or meddle with any of them all: but then euerye man rpsinge vp, with him, greatly to his admiratiō, and honoring him with cap and legge, accepting that hys gesturc as a stately and graue behaviour in him. Some of them accompany him cheek by cheek with friendly commendation, and great thanks for his vnwonted and friendly curtesy: and the rest following after hard vppon his heeles, playnly to his sight intendinge to accompany him home to dynner, as they thinke like bidden and welcome guesstes, but as he thinkes like mallapect impudent, and sausy marchaunts: if now it were possible to beholde euen at this instant, with our outward eyes, the strange thoughts and ymaginatiōs of this poze, distressed, and miserable miser. I think the meriest company of stageplayers, that might be founde in a countrey, would hardly make moresport then he him selfe would do alone: for to see how glummysly hee glyeth aside, like a bere at a flake, and how manye
stops

stoppes and turnes he makes before he comes home, and how priuily he baneth them, wishing the Deuill and his dam to choke them all, the sight thereof no doubt, if it were possible one horse face might laugh at an other, would make any horse in the world to break his halter, I can but wish that I hadde eyther Apelles or Zeuxes, skil, in the science of paynting and that I could as perfectly paynt him, with his countenaince according to my imagination, as Zeuxes paynted his grapes, or as Apelles his sheete, which were so cunninglye done on both partes, as euer since to bee had in great estimation, but neuer to bee paternd: the one of them Zeuxes, (as our bookes do report) amonge many other of his notable workes, paynted (as before named) a naked boy with a bunch of grapes as though growing vpon his shoulders, which were so perfitte to the outward sight, as the very byrdes of the ayre, came and lited vppon the boyes shoulder & continually picked vpon the grapes, and though they found no sap:

Idle Inuentions.

yet as appeared by their oft resort, they could not be perswaded, but ϕ grapes they must needes bee, and in that they could neuer pick out any iuice, they seemed rather to impute it to ϕ bluntnes of the bylles, then to the dyynesse of the grapes: for they went continually to a stone which was fast by, and alwayes whet their bylles and so still continued their resort vntil it was taken awaye. The other paynter Apelles hearing of this excellent peece of worke, desired Zeuxes that a day might be appoynted of meetinge betwixte them two before some gentlemen of their friendes & acquaintance, and to passe away somtyme, and to delight the sight of their friends desyred him to bringe of his workes, what he thought good, & that he would do the like, wherunto Zeuxes agreying at ϕ day appoynted among many other wonderful, straunge, and notable workes he brought this naked boy wth ϕ grapes vppon his shoulders, Apelles amonge diuers other lyke wyle very cunning and skilful workes, brought a table couered
with

Idle Inuentions.

4

with a white sheete, & then in viewing euery man the others workes, Apelle greatly commended þ̄ perfit colour and forme of the grapes, & nothing disallowing of al the rest: & then Zeuxes cōmendinge likewise (no otherwise then iust cause doth require) the perfit workmanship in each point of Apelles, desired after all þ̄ he would take away the white sheete which couered his table, for hee would be glad if he might to see all, thē Apelles smiling to hymself sayd, friend Zeuxes, since you are so desirous, I wil not be so ingrateful as to deny you: yet my meanīg was whē I first brought it not euer to vncover it, because I founde some fault with my selfe therein, & therefore was the more loth to show my fault vnto straungers: but since you haue don all this at my request, I wil not herein denye you yours: therfore euen at your pleasure goe and take it of your self, for I will bee loth to condemne my selfe, I hadd rather an other manne shoulde condemne me, Then saide Zeuxes, na friende Apelles, if so bee ȳ you doubt

Idle Inuentions.

any discredite therby. I will not desire
it for any money. But Apelles answer-
inge: I force not for the discredite a-
mong my frendes: take it of and spare
not. Then Zeuxes drawing nere vnto it
as one with chylde, til he had seene what
was vnder, layd both his handes vppon
it at both sides, catchinge to take holde
of the sheete, and suddaynly finding it to
be but a paynted colour and no sheete in
truth turnde him aboute agayne, with
great admiration, & sayd among the al,
that wheras Zeuxes had cūningly (as
the world thought) deceiued the birds.
Apelles hath here more cūningly decei-
ued Zeuxes, for where as in truth I
thought to haue take of a sheete, I haue
but scratchte at a paynted coloure of
whit: & thus with many other pleasant
and pety conceiptes Apelles at þ time
bare away the bell. And now if I had
lyke skil vnto eyther of these, whether
thinke you that my tyme spent in payn-
ting of this man would be lost or no.
But it is wel knowen (the more is the
pitye for this man) I am neither A-
pelles

pelles nor Zeuxes, but playne ydlenes.
And therfore nothinge meete to paynte
him out so orderly as the natural shape
and countenaunce of the manne doth re-
quire.

But leauing the pleasant shew vnto
the cunning paynter, & admitting this
to be true (as I thinke it hath bene put
in vse) could you or any man els blame
this sylly miserable, & wretched mucke-
munger of the world to be rather desy-
rous of the rounth thē of the company
of these secret inuited & bidden guestes:
surely for my part I thinke you cannot
but rather you must holde him excu-
sed.

Therfore sye, to conclude this my lōg
and tedious speech perhaps vnto you,
If I were (as I haue sayde before) a-
greeable with the common course and
nature of men, you might wel haue ga-
thered by my speech, that I was desy-
rous of your rounth and cleanlye ryd-
daunce. But myne estate & callinge is
such, as no company, be it euer so great
can impouerish me, or diminish or take
away

Idle Inuentions.

away any delite from me at all. For the more cōpanye, the greater is my riches and delite if they wil contēt themselues with mee and any dyet: I am none of Shaufastes children, I blush not who soeuer looks vppon mee. And therfore thinke not that I did commend you vnto your study, because I was desirous (as you tooke it) to daunce a turne or two priuily or wantonly alone.

For since you seeme so willinge and contente with my company, with al my harte, I will make you partaker in all the reste of my' causes, which at this tyme I intende to bzing in question, & besydes, rather then you shal thinke me (as you haue thought) weary of your company. If you wil accept of this my arte and symple skyll. I came and will affoord you, for euery hower in the day, for euery day in the yere, and for euery yere durynge your lyfe, seueral questions, with many pretye conceiptes at all tymes to busy and occupye your selfe withall: as presentlye shal appeare, yf you will bouchsafe vnto mee your friend.

Idle Inuentions

so

friendly audience.

Student

Friend Idlenes, you say, and true it is, that you are acquaintd with þ nature and disposition of all estates, far better then I am, or euer shal be able to conceiue, and that by reason of your lōg experience and continual company with all men: then must I needes now think and certaynly perswade my selfe, that you are not now vnacquaintd, nor to learne the qualittes of a knaue. There is an old saying and oftentymes founde to be true. ni, fa, pa, con: admitte you were a teacher of the common people, or a scholemayster ouer manye children as no doubt sometime you are, beyng a great medler; and busye bodye in any thing, & dayly intruding your selfe into euery vocation, & calling from þ highest to the lowest what soeuer, as a most ydle & mery cōpanion: staring as boldlye vppon a Kinge as you doe vppon the meanest & playnest begger: if a man
may

Idle Inuentions.

may aske you a questiō: how would you
open vnto the common people, or howe
would you teach your younge schollers
to vnderstand the meaninge of these 4.
wordes, ni, fa, pa, con.

Idlenes

Sir I am no more nice in aunswear-
ring then I am in putting forth. But to
tell you the truth (which I thinke you
do already know) it pertaynes nothing
at all vnto mee to be a teacher, though
sometymes I confesse I am in compa-
ny with manye wyse and learned men.
for where I accompany most, there they
learne and teach least: & litle or nothing
tendinge to goodnes, is euer brought in
question, butlesse it be at a verpe greate
chaunce: and then also am I fayne to de-
part as one whose companie is so litle
esteemed, as though nothing necessary
at all, & yet the meaninge of this shorte
sentence, me thinkes I shoulde easlye
vnderstande, and the rather because I
haue hard it oft. I think (to be short) it
is

65
is as much to say: as, *Nimia familiaritas parit contemptū.* And by this may a scholler easily vnderstand the meaning and for the instruction of the common people, it is as much to say, as to much familiarity breedeth contempt.

Student.

Friend Idleness I see you are not altogether an ignoraunte, though you confesse your selfe neuer to bee in company wher any godnes is taught: as it seemeth knowledge comes to you by inspiration, but wherof I know not: you haue hit the right way of playne instruction to a Scholler: but as to the common people, you haue left it as raw as you found it, though you haue spoken it in English, for the ignoraunt & common people do as wel vnderstand English, for the most parte, as they vnderstande greeke: though sometime vnderstanding nothing they verily thinke they vnderstand all: and vnderstanding as much as a block, they thinke the greatest doctor
in

Idle Inuentions.

in the world can hardly amēd them, yet they will saye, is it not english: and am not I an English man: why then I pray you may not I vnderstād it: but it may be aunswared, are ther not many English men ignorantēs: yes, why may not you then be an English ignorantē, but there is an old prouerbe, ignorance is an enemy to knowlege, it is commonly seeme, an ignorant man wil alwaies fynd faults and dissalow of those things wherein hee hath no skill, and fyndes a fault where no fault is to be found, and especially when impudency is ioynd wth to his ignorance: for then he will profes him self before eyther his prince or any wyse or learned counsaile, thinking his owne wit (when he is a veryfoole) to be best of al: but as þ old saying is: who is so bould as blynd bayarde: who thinks he knowes more then hee that knowes nothing at al: for the wise & learned wil say, hoc solum scio quod nihil scio. I only know this þ I know nothg at al. And the foole sayth, what know not I: whereuppon the wise man sayth with the

the Whisition it is time for wise men to hold there peace, when euery foole will be a Whisition. And therfore my friend to make this plain English more plain as wel vnto you as to the common people: whereas you say, to much familiarity breedeth contempt: this is yet as I haue said hard lattine vnto þ cōmon people, for it is impossible euer to be to familiar w a wise & honest mā, how therfore now can this sentenec seeme true in al, since it can not be sometyne to much it can not alwaies breed contempt: and therfore though the sentence of it selfe be true, yet to þ cōmō vnderstāding you haue opened it to darkly. þ plain english is this: to much familiarity breedeth contempt, þ is, to be checkmate at any time, & haile fellowe to much w a knaue or a foole, and no doubt hee wil take thereby such impudēt courage, as after a while you shal fynde to bee most true, that he will not greatlye sticke in anye compaignye what soeuer, to spyt in your mouth when you passe the Streetes talkinge with

Idle Inuentions.

With your friend, he wil not be ashamed to come and colle you about the neck, if you chaunce in friendly manner to geue him but one friendlye worde, or merve looke, you shal not sayle of a thousande agayne, with many a counterset wrong shapen & croked countenaunce. if so curteously sometime by chaunce you entertayne him as to set him at your boorde, you shal fynd him sometime in your lap when you would with him further of: if at any tyme for your pleasures sake, you wil vouchsafe to talke with him in the presence of his betters. Afterward perhappes when you shall be reasoning with your friend, hee wil be ready with his sausy tounge to haue a choppe at euerie word that shal proceed from your mouth, and thinks it a glozy vnto him if he be a meane man, your inferiour & knaue or a foole, that he may so boldly chop logicke with one that is so farre aboue him, and his better,

And what is the comon speach sometime of the veriest knaue in a country? Will not he say, (being alwayes in quarrell

rell, and continuall iar with his neighbours, geuing them oft tymes his own name) the proudest knaue of you al shal offer mee no wronge, I can goe to my Lorde and to my Ladye, and to the best gentleman in the shire early or late, to dinner or to supper, or at any tyne whē soeuer I lust, I can speak as boldly vnto thē as I can vnto my familiar friend & brother, when a thousand such brymmedaries and playne knaues, as you be, must stand at y^e doze, or if you chāce to come in, then with cap in hand, and many a low curtesie. And therfore you playne knaues of y^e countrey: how dace you abuse me (he might say) the capital and captayne knaue of the worlde: & how can the poze countrey mā answer him since oftentimes they fynd and see these his sayings to be true. They haue nothing in the worlde to say, but when y^e knaue is out of sight, then to whisper amonge themselues, and say, the more knaue y^e better luck: if we could as cunningly play y^e knaues, as he, we should eate sometyme venyson, and haue other

I

good

Idle Inuentions.

good cheere among the best, as wel as
hee: but since our bringing vp hath not
bene to beare cunninglye two faces in
one hood: or like the subtil woulfe, to
goe wrapt in a lambes skinne, or like a
crafty and flatterynge knaue to keepe
continuall company among gentlemen
in auctoritie and rule, as though hee
were the honestest man in the worlde:
wee must content our selfe as many ho-
nest poore men do, to put vp daylye in-
iurye and wronge at manye an arrant
knaues hande. The crafty knaue doth
continually picke out more friendship
with his Tounge then the simple man
euer could with his inforced and lamen-
table teares. Yet we must needes agre
that teares at all tymes are not to be
pitied, for often tymes in a man they be
token greate dissemblinge, vnlesse his
cause bee the greater, and to a womā
some will say they be natural, and take
away her teares, take away her lyfe: &
therfore the lesse to be blamed, though
sometime she weepes for euery tryfle:
for wee see by experience that she wil
weepe

wepe & laugh, and both with one mynd oftentimes very hartely, and that most commonly wout any disgrace to her credite or fauour at all: it shewes playnly that she wil soone be angry & soone pleased, and therin she kepes stil þ nature of the soft and gentle child; & he þ offers a child wronge, hath but small witt and discretion: it hath sildome bene scene, þ mallice coulde neuer rust in a womans hart: where it continually ebs & slowes there remayneth litle corruption, þ continuall runninge riuers we see alwaies most cleere at the bottom, & the stāding puddles continually full of filth: cast as much gravel & stones into þ one as you can, and shortly after with one flow you shall see it as clean at the bottom as it was before: cast as much and as litle as you wil into the other, if you come 7. yeare after. you shal fynd it stil at þ bottom. this stāding puddle we se is neuer cleane, but once in 7 yeare it hardly escapes brisyde, either in a muckrom or in a swordes poynt. The other we see it so continually cleer, as it needes not to be side.

Idle Inuentions.

in the one we see duckes and geese continually swilling and bibling for todes; in the other we see fisher mē with their siluer hookes continually anglinge for fish, with greate pastime and pleasure; the one is for the hogge to wallow in & sometyme for the Oxe and the Cow to drink in, & other for gentlemen to hake at, & sometymes perhappes to watter their nagges in: & thus if your eye sight be any thing clear, you may plainly see that teares at a womans eye, be tokens in her a myld and gentle hart, cleare at the bottom from all enuye and malice, though sometymes perhappes at & first it beginnes of a curst and a shrewish stomake, as for disgrace which sometimes it bringes vnto the fauour of her face, it is with women as it is with men: it is a comly sight in some man to looke a loft like a lyō, in some other it is a thing very vnseemly.

Speech and continuall talking, becometh some men very wel: few words or rather continuall silence, becometh an other man as well, it is a good sight

fight to see some men in costly and gorgeous apparel, according to the vanity of the tyme, to see other some it is as good a sight as to see a curre dogge in a fatten dublet: for a pretty spaniell it is a great deale better. Is it not a good & commendable sight to behold some mā in his side gowne and white sirples, and euery way besides in the best and most cōly attyre which pertaineth to a graue and diuine minister? Doth not a shorthe coat a payre of hye buckled shooes, and a capp with a button on the crowne, become an other man as well in his vocation (as the countrey husband man) is it not as good a sight to see an egregious offender, and a common breake of the Princes lawes punished accordinge to his offence, as it is to see the obediēt and true subiect, continuallye cherished and made of: to be short, what soeuer is thought cumly for an honest man, is neuer thought meete for a knaue, and though sometime he puts it on it makes hym appeare but a counterfet. Put a beluet coate vppon a knowen naturall,

Idle Inuentions.

and common foole, is he not more to be
laught at then if hee were in his pyde-
tote: byringe an egregious and knowne
knaue in place to play the part of an ho-
nest man, were it not a thing rather to
be laught at then commended: vnlesse
he ment neuer to reuert agayne. which
is sildome seene: in the behauioure of
man, there be manye iesses, and expe-
rience teacheth vs that euery one of the
becomes not euery man alyke. But al-
wayes according to the natural dispo-
tion and bringing vp of the man, they
pee de their comly and vncomey grace
in him, euen so is it (to come vnto my
purpose) as I haue sayd amonge y^e wo-
men: for that which doth verye well set
forth & become one woman, doth as
greatlye disgrace & disuiger an other.
but there a straw: in that I know (as I
haue sayd, women be soone angerd, and
then without a sodaine ebbe, their harts
wil sone sinck in sorrow, therfore I wil
not meddle to far with them. yet thus
much I hope I may boldlye say wth the
philosopler, who spake more in cōmen-
dation

uation of the teares of a woman (beyng
rightly wayed) then I wil at this tyme
vtter, y a teare at som womā's eye doth
peelde far more beautifull and comelye
grace vnto the fauour of her, then the
fayrest and best dyamond that may bee
found doth vnto y pretiest ring, or most
pctious iewel in the worlde: and ther-
vpon that philosopher said, that a teare
in many a womans eye is a pearle in a
mans. But leauing the Philosopher w
all his skill, they neuer proceede harte-
ly from them (I think surely) with out
som great cause of unkindnes or greefe.
But as is said, w men no doubt, for the
most part it is taken for dissemblinge, &
yet oftē we see, they are inforced thereto
by nature though it cā not excuse them.
But friend Tolenes, this leads vs with
the Lapwing cleane from our matter,
touching y behauiour of a knaue, & the
construction of my late demaunde, and
whereunto I haue replied according to
your answer, as I haue thought good:
for I haue shewed you a more playner
Construction of the sentence. whiche

Idle Inuentions .

I putte forth vnto you, then you in my iudgement did make at th: first & therefore now what think you of my construction made thereof.

Idlenes.

Sir to geue by shortly myne opinion (being very loth to hinder or interrupt your purpose in any spech at this time) to my knowlege, you haue opened no more thē is true: but whether you haue declared al þ truth therof or no I know not.

Student

No fricnde Idlenes I meane not to beate my braynes to open all þ is true, for if I could do so I might fill a house or rather a whole coutry ful of books, which were vnfit for anye ydle bodye to take in hand. But admyttinge (as you haue graunted) that all I haue sayd is true, I haue sufficiently obtayned my desire, for then I hope as you in youre
first

first question propounded vnto me, crept into my indgement, by a simile, & thereby (as you sayd) gathered myne opinion in a further matter which serued your turne: euen so now haue I as well serued mine, in that you haue confessed my construction of the sentence put forth vnto you, to be true in euery poynt: for now I thinke you wil easily see & soone confesse your owne fault.

Therefore friend iniury cal your wits togeather, and remēber wel your selfe when you first tooke occasion to presse your selfe into my companie, desirous as you seemed verie friendlye to craue sometime of cōference with me, finding your speech and behauiour so agreable vnto my good lyking, I was content to entertayne & admit you into my society and companie, as heretofore hath appeared, and to allow of your familiar & bould speech, as if you had bene my chiefe companion and mate: & now you baūt of your victoꝝ, that you haue won me to lye bathinge my selfe with you in your lasy and ydle tubbe with your al-
lurpng

Idle Inuentions.

Iurig sweete water of vanity. And now
as though I would not wish þe spending
of one hower willinglye without your
company: you offer your selfe to hange
about my necke, as though you were
with mee haile fellowe wel met. But
friend ydenes, when I first entertained
you (I finde now as a bould geast) I
ment nothig lesse, nor yet do I mind, to
wray you (as gentlemē & gentlewomē
do their ribonds & chaynes) aboute my
neck. I would be loth to be sene carryng
you (as begers do their childe) vpon
my back: therfore since vpon thys small
familiarity vouchsafed vpon you (as one
of shameles childe) you begin to creep
vpon my backe, no doubt you wil shortly
fulfil my former speach, to spit into my
mouth. But friend ydenes, neither my
neck nor my mouth be any fit places for
you, I haue otherwayse to imploy thē:
& now setting partiality aside, be your
owne iudge whether the old saying, to
much familiarity breedeth cōtempt, be
here found true in you or no: and when
you know your selfe to bee the haynest
mem-

member in the word, then stryue not to
dallye any further with me in defēding
or answearing of any thing, for I mynd
no longer to trouble my selfe, nor to
spend any more tyme in hearynge your
ydle deuyses: therfore wher as you say,
you can feed me with ydle questions e-
uery howet in the day, euery day in the
peare, and euery peare durynge my lyfe,
if I wil but graūt you audience: I wish
you rather to bestow them and your
selfe also wher you list: and thus in stid
of audiēce I grant you here my rōūth.
It hath bene an old sainge, many geese
many bīdes, many womē many words:
but you haue idle talk plēty for a whole
countrey, both of mē & womē, therefore
sone as to late, I yeeld vnto you þ game
betimes.

Idlenes.

If I shoulde thus bee lefte at euery
hand, I might wel then go and seeke a
companion in the Skyes. But this is
nothyng straunge vnto mee, for I am
often-

Idle Inuentions.

sometimes thus banished and sent away
& yet after a while presently sometime
and priuily intertayned agayn.

But since now for a tyme I am very
lyke to be left here all alone, I wil im-
ploy my self according to the polenes of
the place.

Idlenes

Primus iucūduſ tolle-
RANDVS, ATQVE
ſecundus tertius eſt
vanus: ſed fetat
quatridi-
anus.

Primus.

VWho geaſtviſe gape at euery feaſt
his hoſt the firſt tyme hartely
Sayth vvelcome ſir, among the reſt,

and

Idle Inuentions

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and ioyes to feede his fantasy,

Secundus.

But if the sweetnes of the fare,
 gleeve stil the glutton there to staye,
 And that he pyne, if he should spare
 to presse agayne the like assay.

The goodman then for manners sake
 vvil bid him vvelcome as his frend,
 Content his folly so to take,
 as though ther vv ere no more behynd:

Tertius.

But then if there such roote remayne
 of shames shifts so rype in him:
 As that he can not yet refrayne,
 But stil in follies puddle swim.

He shall the third tyme come in vayne,
 vvith vvordes of vvelcome none at all,
 And must haue scarcely for his payne,
 one drop of drinke vnlesse hee call.

Quatridianus.

The fourth, the fault doth smell amayne

goe

Idle Inuentions.

goe place fyr smell rost then in hall,
Or vvith lack drumme him entertayne
vvithout the dores vvith dogges to braule.

His stomack stampe, as hunger slayne,
to gorge such geastes it is a payne.
V Who vvifely can him selfe so strayne
to match such mates shall greatly gayne

For now such suckpaps olde do raygne,
vvhich after dugges that drop good chear
Do so much dayly fond and fayne,
as no place can from them be cleere,

For wearing of ringes.

F Or that it is a prouerbe olde,
the vvinner may best vveare the gold
V Ve knubby knuckles rusty rough
do see more fit to lead the plough,
V Which fond to see their fingers shyne,
in steede of fatt, vvith goulden myne

But vvifely vvayed it is most vayne
and bringes such thinges in gear disdayne,
V When ringes be knackes for euery knaue
for then no vvifemen vvil them craue

But

Idle Inuentions

60

But were it trim to ring the nose
 I thinke I might soone fynd out those
 That would to please their daynty gyrles
 send that withringe and pretious pearles.

Disorder marreth euery thinge
 so doth misvearyng of your ringe,

Cost is comly wher order is
 good order therefore should not misse
 And such as weare them as they ought
 the worthier then shall they be thought

But some men thinke and so do I
 that natures flesh when it is bare,
 Without such pearles or paultery
 if fayre, is fittest for the glare.

For when dame Venus playnly shorwes
 her selfe in natures naked vveed
 Your eyes then flye not after crowes,
 but slayes to feede your vvanton neede.

To this the vviseest men of all
 As we see dayly they be thrall

But as for pearles, of pretious stones
 they passe not for they be but toyes,

And

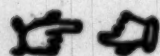
Idle Inuentions.

And gaudy geaugavves for the nones,
vvhich they accompt as childish ioyes.

But since they haue bene greatly vsd
though much perhappes by some abuse
It is not good to take awaye
such comly costly gold array.

But vvhoe so vscth it aright
reserues the thumbe as for the knight
And here in order as they lye,
your finger rynges you may apply.

Miles, Marcator, Stultus, nuptie,
& amator.



To vveare the ringe vpon the thum
is for the Knight.

The forefinger for the
Marchaunt.

The middle finger for
the Foole

The

Idle Inuentions

or

The third finger for the
married man.

The little finger for
the Louer.



The Knight sayth in his ring,
no vaunt to victory.

The Marchaunt in his,
no foe to Fortune.

The Foole in his
no cost to colours.

The Maryed man in his
no iarre to ielousy.

The louer in his
no friende to fayth.

The Knight in field in armour clad,
in eye of foes vvhich fayne his fall
He sayth he sighes vvhhen trule is had:
no yaunt to victory great or small.

K

The

Idle Inuentions.

2 The marchant saylyng in his Ship,
VVith trafficke far and neere for gayne,
Still doubting lest he once should slip,
no foe to fortune sayth he playne.

3 The Foole in folly fettered fast,
led forth fond fancies most to craue
He cares not vvhat doth vvast or last.
no cost to colours (sayth he) braue.

4. The married man great griefes indure,
and oft his hart new panges supply,
And yet nothing can him allure
but sayth no iar to iclousye,

5 The louer liues and reapes the joyes
of all the vvorlde, and thus he sayth
VVhere true loue lackes the rest be toyes
the earth doth beare no friend to sayth.

The rich man restles loth to heare
of all sortes some to speake their mynde.
And he to seeme of couldest cheere.
VVho can them all in vvealth outvvinde.

Sayth (tumbling vp his rusty bagges
loth to see his glistering gould
Abroad to flye lyke tattered ragges)
no vvoe to vvant vvhen I am old.

The

Idle Inuentions

62

The Kinge.
Omnes vos defendo. I defende
you all.

The king and ruler of the Realme
 by strength of sword and counsaile graue
 Shrinks not to stryue agaynst a streame
 from furious force his seate to saue.

He neuer quayles nor fighes in feare
 his hand and hart alwayes agree,
 No force of armes that man can beare.
 can stay vvhath he intendes to bee.

The strongest streames of riuersvvide
 by Princely pover are made to fall,
 They stop not him to goe or ryde
 for bredth or depth, his foes to gall.

VVhat castle, towver, or strongest hold
 yeelds not in view of princely force,
 And stoupes vvith crackes as vveake & ould
 to geue him vway to take his course.

And graunt him, though a countrey small
 of trusty strong and faythful hartes
 He neuer feares as once to fal,
 though all the vvorld besides take parts

K 2

And

Idle Inuentions.

And therefore rightly thus he sayth,
in all distresse vwhen neede doth call
His subiectes bearyng him true fayth,
he doth defend and saue them all.

The Byshop.
Pro Omnibus vobis oro.
I pray for you all.

The Byshop alvvayes is the choyse
of all the learned in a realme.
His speech doth all mens hartes reioyce
spent euer in som godly theame,

He hath not past, nor spent his youth
in any toyes or fond delyghtes,
But tooke great paynes to seek the truth
and neuer voyde of heauenly sightes,

His eyes and mind haue bene so bent
to feede themselues vwith heauenly ioyes,
As all his tyme therein not spent
he countes as lost in vworldly toyes,

This man no tyme he doth obay
but all tymes serues him at his vvill.
No temporall ioy he doth assay,
But feedes of heauenly foode his fill.

vvhich

Idle Inuentions.

63

VVhich yeeldes to him such pleasaunt tast
as he from all the vworld doth bende,
And chuse the thing that ever last,
in godlines his lyfe to spende,

And thus hee passeth all his tyme
most iustly therfore may he say
In blaming vs for any cryme,
that for vs all he is to praye,

The husbandman.

*Omnes vos nutruo: I feede
you all.*

The husbandman he leades his lyfe,
and liues in quiet playne estate,
He hath no tyme to lose in stryfe,
nor yet must spend beyond his rate,

The vvitty vvylie sportes he synde,
to him they be no ioyes at all,
Most plaine conceytes please best his mynde
vvith hand and foote torosse a ball,

Hee beares the saltbagge of the earth,
and vvith his compasse seasons it,
He sovres vvith ioy, and reapes vvith mirth
the thinges for men vvich be most fit.

K 3

The

Idle Inuentions.

The earth the substance is of man
from whence all creatures first were made
And thence our lively sode began,
now mayntaynd by this golden trade.

VVhich once let slacke but for a while
it shortly after vvil appeare.

VVho is most wise vvil vse least vile
and shal most sone shevy couldst cheere.

And therfore thus among the rest
to speake the truth he may be bould
That from the worst vnto the best
hec feedes all sortes both younge and olde.

The Phisition.

Omnes vos edo.

I eate you all.

VVhere liberall Artes do all take roots
from thence Phisitions most do springe
A trade vvhich if they vvin, doth boote
them greatly all, much weath to bringe

He wholly lyeues vpon his art,

VVherin lieth wasted all his age

He hath no meane to mend his marc

but when our paynes he can assuage.

VVhich

Idle Inuentions.

64

VWhich doth all sortes of men so vring
as fevv or none can lacke him long.
And vwhere the empty purses cling
they must abyde the paynfyl prong

For if he should of pittty spend
VVith all poore payned soules his tyme,
He might himselfe to begging bend,
vvhich vvere in him a haynous crime.

But rich or pore vvho hath a grote,
though he perhaps be hunger slayne,
That vvil not keepe it from his throte
to ease his heauy hart of payne.

VWhere to he oft vvith griued mynd
sees men so driuen all to spende
And sparing not to speake his kind
sayth he eates all vp at the end.

The light woman.
Omnes vos decipio.
I deceaue you all.

This vvoman is by natures shape,
and forme to sight so beautifull
As happy he vvwhose eyes escape
most cleanly there to take a pull.

K4

He

Idle Inuentions.

Her beauty hayres in euery place,
her passport no man euer craues:
Such vertue resteth in her face,
and thence her selfe so well behaues.

For natures workes most wonderful
in beauties face do shew such light
As men haue pleasures plentifull
they thinke when they enjoy her sight,

Her face is fayre, shee loues to shew,
with body, hand, and foote if fyne,
That makes the hake eyed checkes to glow,
to thinke how all the rest would shyne.

Her cleere and starlike glyding eyes
when footing fayles her longe to stande:
Bytes him who thinkes him selfe most wise,
and makes him stoope to kisse her hand

How should the sillye Mouse beuare
To keepe out of the secreete snare
Sayth shee when they that wiser be
are trapp'd in snares at sight of mee.

And therefore mistris modesty
concenting that the truth be tolde,
She saith who knowes not well that I
deceyue you all both young and olde.

Death

Idle Inuentions

63

Death sayth
Omnes vos interficio. I
kill you all.

V When soule and body doth depart,
the death doth challenge straight his shareme
V Which fyrst vvas let for no desert
but freely geuen for the shareme.

All prisons of immortall soules,
he claymes as his inheritance,
And yet shovves neuer deedes nor roules,
but takes them alvvayes as they chance.

For since the graunt to him vvas made
by God vvhom no man can vvithstand
He small accountes of Lavviers trade
but all alike hee takes in hand.

All men be tenants vnto Death,
and yet but at the vvill of God
From vvhom proceeds our lyuely breath,
vvhich goone remaynes a hollovv clodde.

V Wherein his bare and naked bones
he then doth place to take their rest
V Whose presence such men mostly mones
as thinke this vvorkly life is best.

He

Idle Inuentions,

He neuer any tenant: feare,
before the cheefest lord of all,
Command him as his messenger,
such tenant to his Lord to call

And then he comes to him in speede
vvith such a doleful deadly sound,
VVhich makes the strongest harte to bleede,
and yeeld his body to the ground.

He spare no king for all his strength,
nor any man for pollicy
Nor VVoman for beauty at the length
but calles in time them all to dye.

Therefore my haruest tyme sayth he,
doth neuer cease some vvhere to fall
But ripe, or rotten as you be,
my cyth in fyne cleare sheeres dovvne all.

Youthful age,

But youthful age, thus death doe blame,
And shootes this boult vvith vvanton aime,

That vvhere I Death or Death could be

and

Idle Inuentions

and were I then as I am now,
Fayre vvomen sure should syldome dye
vntil their age did make them bow.

If Death did manlike deale his dole,
he could not shew that cruelty
To hayle such into vgly hole
vvhich loke on him so pitiously.

But vvantons some perhaps vvill say
that vvomen they haue hartes most strong
And oft sing merily careaway
soone after many a paynful prong,

VVhich can not vvell vvith reason be,
since dayly sight doth teach vs this,
They neuer naked vvesapon see
but streyght they faynt vvorse skeard then
(hurt

Her strenghe of body is most small
the vvakeest man that may be founde
If any strength he hath at all,
soone tryps her downe, she treads so ligh

Therefore me thinkes great reason might,
persvade this raging Death to spare
Such vvweaklinges from that paynfull plight,
to choke them vvith such soverer fare.

But

Idle Inuentions.

But synce these vvomen can preuayle,
to print no pittye into death,
All liuing thinges must needes then fayle
and yeelde to take their rest in earth

But vvell I know this earth is not
the place of euerlasting rest,
And therefore here to end my knot,
I thinke it vvere not so the best.

For I haue learnd the place of rest
to vs is euerlasting lyfe,
Our endles death the deuils nest,
vvhose cythe is sure the deadly knyfe

As for the vvorldly death before
discribde as though most terrible
It is but as a common sore,
and this the death most horrible.

The vvorldly death vve dayly see.
all vvise men do prouide for it,
They neuer seeme for feare to flee,
but rather fayne to fill the pitte,

But nowv since here some speech is spēt
of Death and of his quiddity.
Where naked death vvvas onely ment
vvith some thing of his quality.

My

Me thinkes I might as well now spend
a worde or two in other deathes
Which do our lyues as much offende
and more the that which stops our breath

For when we first hoise vp our sayles
most braue in all our iollities.
Then straight flies by the pretty quayles
which so do feed our fantasies,

As straight we stoupe in kind as cockes,
and trotting after flickering winges
To view them as they flye in flockes
and where they light to plant our springs

And when we haue them caught in snares,
we leape for ioy of what is won,
Not thinking of our endles cares.
which thereupon are straight begon,

But then (as they be nimble wingde,
oft flickering if they flye away)
Our vvocfull hartes we fynd so vwingd
as syldome can we ioy good day

And this (if well and rightly vwayed,)
imagind better priuaty,

The

Idle Inuentions:

Then can by arte be vvel displayde,
so Death claymes neere affinity

Therefore the louer rightly sayde
and can by none be vvel denyed
That sure it is a deadly payne
to loue and not be loued agayne.

And here therewith I make an end
true loue is sure a faythful friende,
VWhen true loue parts it is a death
though stil in breast remaines the breath,

More liuing deathes I might vuell name
vvhich kepes mans life in death like frame
VWhen clounish clookes of knaues preuaile
to force the guikles hartes to quaille.

But thete a strauv till leasure serue,
such clovnlike shape in brasse to carue
And thus to knitt the finall knot
death stil vvil be the latter lot,

The vvhich God graunt all men may dravv,
vvith price of euerlasting ioy,
And then their debts be dubble payd,
vvhom nowv the vvorldly vvronges annoy.

FINIS

Mors tua, mors Christi.
Fraus mundi gloria cœpi.
Et dolor inferni,
Sunt meditanda tibi.

That Christ did die, that thou must die,
the vworldly fraude, the heavenly ioy,
The endles bitter paines of hell,
sosse them (as tennis balles) in minde,

But heret some perhaps vwill sticke,
and say, vwho alwaies thinkes of death
Shal neuer looke vvith chearefull face,
but swarte, and vvan, and halfe as dead.

VWhereby appeares, vvhome nature hath
forbidden beauties siluer shovv,
To good more prone and ready be,
then they vvhom nature hath decoerd.

The one I vvill not maserate
saith he my plumround physnomie
My straight made lims I vvill not crooke
to thinke of death, of de will, or God,

The other saith my fauour is harde,
my bod y crouke, of all despisde,

Idle Inuentions.

The world I leaue it loues not me
I loy to thinke on heauenly thinges.

The happy blessed man
doth loth this vworldly life.
The vvicked stryues in vvhat he can
to vvhet still pleasures knife.

The vvicked vvighte bevvayles the fight
of deadly naked dart:
To blessed plight it bringes delight,
vvho gently yeeldes his hart,

*Vita principium mortis;
Mors vltima linia rerum.*

Lyfe is the first begynning
of Death, and death the
last end of all.

Man peepes no sooner out
his vitall breath to take,
But death him compasse round aboute
his subiect strayght to make

By

Idle Inuentions

By speech or pen the busy men
 V Who most in vvordes delight,
 Must needes afford the last cold vvorde
 to death vvwhich is his right.

FINIS.

The Compositor to the Auctour.

As tyme doth teach and rule the roving mynd,
 So tyme hath brought thy toppling taske to end;
 As tyme hath licens'd vs to seeke and fynd,
 So tyme doth warne vs compt thee as a frend:
 And Oth thou toyes thy Golden tyme to spend
 For Countreys sake some profite pure to be,
 Tyme warnes vs all due thanks to render thee.

Who merites fame, renowne, or lasting prayse
 But onely those that toyle in Countreys cause?
 Who beares the bell in these our dismall dayes,
 But they which can discribe the curious clause?
 Therefore post on my pen and do not pause,
 Till thou hast playd with speede a thankful part
 To laude and prayse the Authoys willinge heart.

L

For

to the Auctor

You musling myndes that murmur in delight,
Come lend your Eares to heare a word or twayne,
Turne backe one leafe, cast of all hateful spyte,
To learne this lesson do not now disoayne:
Do you not know what hateful wordes do gayne?
Be of good cheere O Thimelthorpe I pray,
Passe not a pin what prating Parrats say.

Thou sowest hast the seede for vs to reape,
We of thy toyle the sugred sweete do taste:
And sth it comes to all of vs so cheape,
Therof we wil not wantonly make wast:
A friendly looke in fayth the wyse will cast,
For that is all I know that thou dost craue,
A thousand thanks therfore be sure to haue.

For Venus mates, or for their fury fell,
Passe not a whit, esteeme them as they are:
Let them goe bathe in Lymbo lake of hell:
Thy fame shall liue for euer take no care:
And if that I could learnedly prepare
My pen to paynt out verses pure and braue,
Thy name should liue when corpes lye cloeso in graue.

Yet I which haue but weakz and simple skill,
Can well discerne the good from bad I know,
The wyser sort when they haue blewd their fill
And tost this Pamphlet ouer too and froe,
I ken my selfe what count'naunce they will shew:

The

84
to the Auctor

The faultes therein the 'll not impute to thee,
But iudge the Printers presse in part to be,
To the Reader,

Good Reader, syth thou hast perused the same,
And mayst agayne at pleasure thine behold
If faultes thou fynd the Auctor do not blame,
No furious word agaynst him do unfold,
But (use thy pen) in mending ought be bould,
A wyter sure as yet he is but young,
Therefore to laude him exercise thy tounge.

So wilt thou win the worthy prayse of all
That here among graue wyters do remayne.
Of gentle blood accompt thee sure wee shall,
Fye far from taunts which still thy name doth stain,
And from the face of false enupous trayne,
The call to mynd what Volumes still we see,
That safe from faultes can not excused bee.

The Learned man will see, and litle say,
The wittles wight his tounge lyes neuer still.
A good report if wyse men shew alway,
Let prating peysautes prattle what they will.
When they their venten haue spread out their fell,
The wyse will iudge what folle merits then
And who doth purchase prayse the best of men.

Finis, R. S.